



AIMSweb® Training Workbook:

Progress Monitoring

Strategies for Writing Individualized Goals in General Curriculum
and More Frequent Formative Evaluation

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Dear AIMSweb Subscriber:

Welcome to the *AIMSweb* formative assessment and basic skills improvement system. *AIMSweb* provides teachers, school administrators, and parents a complement to the summative (high stakes) assessment/evaluation model prevalent in education today. Rather than just providing schools with information about student learning at the end of the school year, *AIMSweb* organizes and reports the results of simple, accurate, low cost, and more frequent testing using validated General Outcome Measures like Curriculum-Based Measurement during the school year. The *AIMSweb* formative assessment model informs the instructional process as it occurs by identifying at risk students as early as possible and importantly, those students who are learning and those who are not progressing satisfactorily. The distinction between “did they learn last year” and “are they learning this year” represents a paradigm shift, one that is critical for quality improvement!

The *AIMSweb* system consists of four components:

1. Two web-based data management and information reporting programs to report and graph the results of Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM) in early literacy, reading, and spelling.
 - *AIMSweb Benchmark* manages, evaluates, reports, and charts the results of three times per year school benchmark assessments for all students Grades K-8.
 - *AIMSweb Progress Monitor* allows teachers to monitor students at risk or those students with more severe educational needs more frequently to evaluate the effects of interventions and document appropriate instructional changes.
2. Standard General Curriculum Assessment Materials:
 - *Standard Benchmark Reading Assessment Passages*: A set of 3 graded and equivalent standard passages for Grades 1-8 for establishing fall, winter and spring reading benchmarks (24 total passages). These passages are also available in Spanish.
 - *Standard Progress Monitoring Reading Assessment Passages*: A set of 30 graded and equivalent passages for Grades 2-8, 20 for Grade 1 and 20 for Primer Level for use in more frequent and continuous monitoring (250 passages total).
 - *Early Literacy Indicators*: A set of 3 equivalent Standard Benchmark Early Literacy Indicators to assess Phonemic Awareness and Phonics for Kindergarten and Grade 1 for establishing fall, winter, and spring benchmarks.
 - *Early Literacy Indicators for Progress Monitoring*: A set of 20 equivalent Standard Early Literacy Indicators for Kindergarten and Grade 1 for use in more frequent and continuous monitoring of early literacy skills (20 tests for each indicator).
 - *Standard Maze Passages*: Three Standard Assessment Reading Passages for Grades 1-8 have been prepared in a maze (multiple choice close) format for use as another measure of reading comprehension (24 maze passages total).
 - *Standard Benchmark Spelling Lists*: A set of 3 graded and equivalent standard spelling lists for

use in Grades 1-8 for establishing fall, winter, and spring spelling benchmarks (24 total lists).

- ***Standard Progress Monitoring Spelling Lists:*** A set of 30 graded and equivalent lists of Grade 2-8 spelling words and 20 lists of Grade 1 words (230 total) for use in more frequent and continuous monitoring.

3. Training Workbooks designed to train staff to implement the *AIMSweb* system.

- ***Administration and Scoring of Reading Curriculum-Based Measurement (R-CBM) for Use in General Outcome Measurement***
- ***Administration and Scoring of Early Literacy Indicators for Use in General Outcome Measurement***
- ***Administration and Scoring of Spelling Curriculum-Based Measurement (S-CBM) for Use in General Outcome Measurement***
- ***Administration and Scoring of Reading Maze for Use in General Outcome Measurement of Reading Comprehension***
- ***Organizing and Implementing a Benchmark Assessment Program***
- ***AIMSweb Progress Monitor - Strategies for Writing Individualized Goals in General Curriculum and More Frequent Formative Evaluation***

AIMSweb trainers are available to deliver the training onsite or the materials can be used without assistance.

4. Online Support:

AIMSweb users become members of a community of users and an online support site (*AIMSonline*) designed to solve problems, answer questions, and contribute to professional development and successful implementation. A network of Strategic School Partners and Certified AIMSweb Trainers located around the country are available for inquiries, expertise, training, onsite visits, etc. *AIMSweb* "informs" the teaching and learning process by providing continuous student performance data and reports improvement to students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

Our promise to you is simple. Use of the *AIMSweb* system will improve instruction, increase achievement, and report improvement to all stakeholders.

Gary Germann
President/CEO

Steve Jennen,
Vice President and Chief Technical Officer

Overview of AIMSweb Training Materials

This is one in a series of Training Workbooks developed to accompany *AIMSweb* (Achievement Improvement Monitoring System). The purpose of the series is to provide instruction, delivery models, and practice opportunities to better use *AIMSweb* to improve achievement outcomes.

Administering and Scoring of Reading Curriculum-Based Measurement (R-CBM) for Use in General Outcome Measurement provides instruction and practice in the skill area of reading. The workbook is accompanied by the AIMSweb Training Video which contains segments of students reading to demonstrate key features of administering and scoring the graded reading tests. Critical activities to complete before, during, and after testing, including scoring rules, are provided. Practice examples and answer keys are provided for users to observe and score as well as reproducible forms for making testing easier and more accurate. A Power Point Presentation accompanies the user through the training experience.

Administering and Scoring of Spelling Curriculum-Based Measurement (S-CBM) for Use in General Outcome Measurement provides instruction and practice in the skill area of spelling. The workbook is to be used with the AIMSweb Training Video which also contains demonstrations of key features of administering the graded spelling lists. Critical activities to complete before, during, and after testing, including scoring rules, are provided. Practice examples and answer keys are provided for users to observe and score as well as reproducible forms for making testing easier and more accurate. A Power Point Presentation accompanies the user through the training experience.

Administering and Scoring of Early Literacy Indicators for Use in General Outcome Measurement provides instruction and practice in the skill areas of early reading. The workbook describes five fluency measures designed to assess early literacy acquisition from early Kindergarten to Grade 1, including Beginning Sounds, Letter Names, Letter Sounds, Phonemic Segmentation, and Nonsense Words. The workbook is accompanied by a videotape of students taking these tests to demonstrate key features of administering and scoring each indicator. Critical activities to complete before, during, and after testing, including scoring rules, are provided. Practice examples and answer keys are provided for users to observe and score as well as reproducible forms for making testing easier and more accurate. A Power Point Presentation accompanies the user through the training experience.

Administering and Scoring of Reading Maze for Use in General Outcome Measurement provides instruction and practice in the skill area of reading comprehension. Critical activities to complete before, during, and after testing, including scoring rules, are provided. Practice examples and answer keys are provided for users to observe and score as well as reproducible forms for making testing easier and more accurate. A Power Point Presentation accompanies the user through the training experience.

Organizing and Implementing a Benchmark Assessment Program provides information on how to conduct benchmark testing in general education classrooms. The workbook provides straightforward, simple, and valuable information for planning, communication, and conducting all school benchmark testing. This manual is intended for use with *AIMSweb Benchmark* web-based software.

AIMSweb Progress Monitor - Strategies for Writing Individualized Goals in General Curriculum and More Frequent Formative Evaluation instructs teachers on how to write individualized annual goals for students and monitor progress on a frequent and continuous basis. Intended for use with students in individualized remedial programs - such as special education or Title I - the Training Workbook demonstrates how to write individualized annual goals based on a Survey-Level Assessment (SLA) and provides strategies for collecting student outcome information frequently and continuously. This manual is intended for use with the *AIMSweb Progress Monitor* web-based software.

Big Ideas about Frequent Formative Evaluation Using General Outcome Measures and AIMSweb Progress Monitor

For students with serious educational needs or those students at risk for educational failure, one of the most powerful interventions that schools can use is systematic and frequent formative evaluation. Formative evaluation is the process of assessing student achievement during instruction for the purposes of determining whether an instructional program is effective for individual students. When formative tests show that students are progressing, teachers keep using their instructional programs with confidence; when tests show that students are not progressing, teachers can change their instructional programs in meaningful ways to improve student achievement.

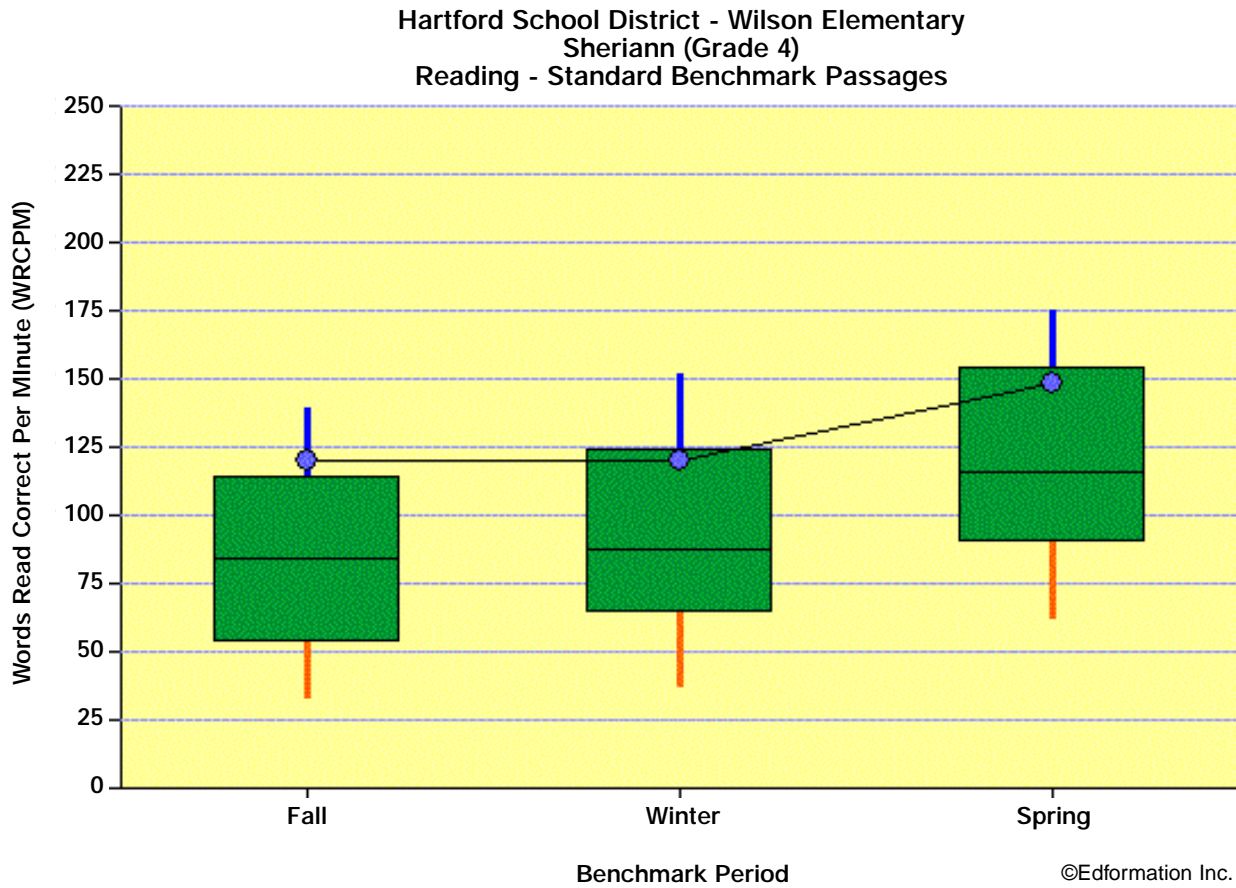
The use of systematic formative evaluation systems with students with severe educational needs such as special education or Title I has been linked to important gains in student achievement (L. Fuchs, 1986) with effect sizes of .7 and greater. For interpretive purposes, an effect size of .7 would mean that a student who was at the 50th percentile without formative evaluation would be expected to perform at the 76th percentile with formative evaluation. This impact on learning is impressive.

Systematic formative evaluation requires the use of standard assessment tools that are of the same difficulty and that are given the same way each time. Traditional weekly spelling tests, for example, can be a type of formative evaluation, but typically, the assessment process is not systematic. The words students are tested on change each week and therefore the tests may not be of the same difficulty. It becomes difficult for teachers to decide, then, if Roderick, who spelled 10 words correctly on last week's test, improved in spelling because this week, he spelled 12 words correctly. This week's words may have been much easier to spell. Also, last week's spelling test may have included 15 words while this week's test required Roderick to spell 20 words.

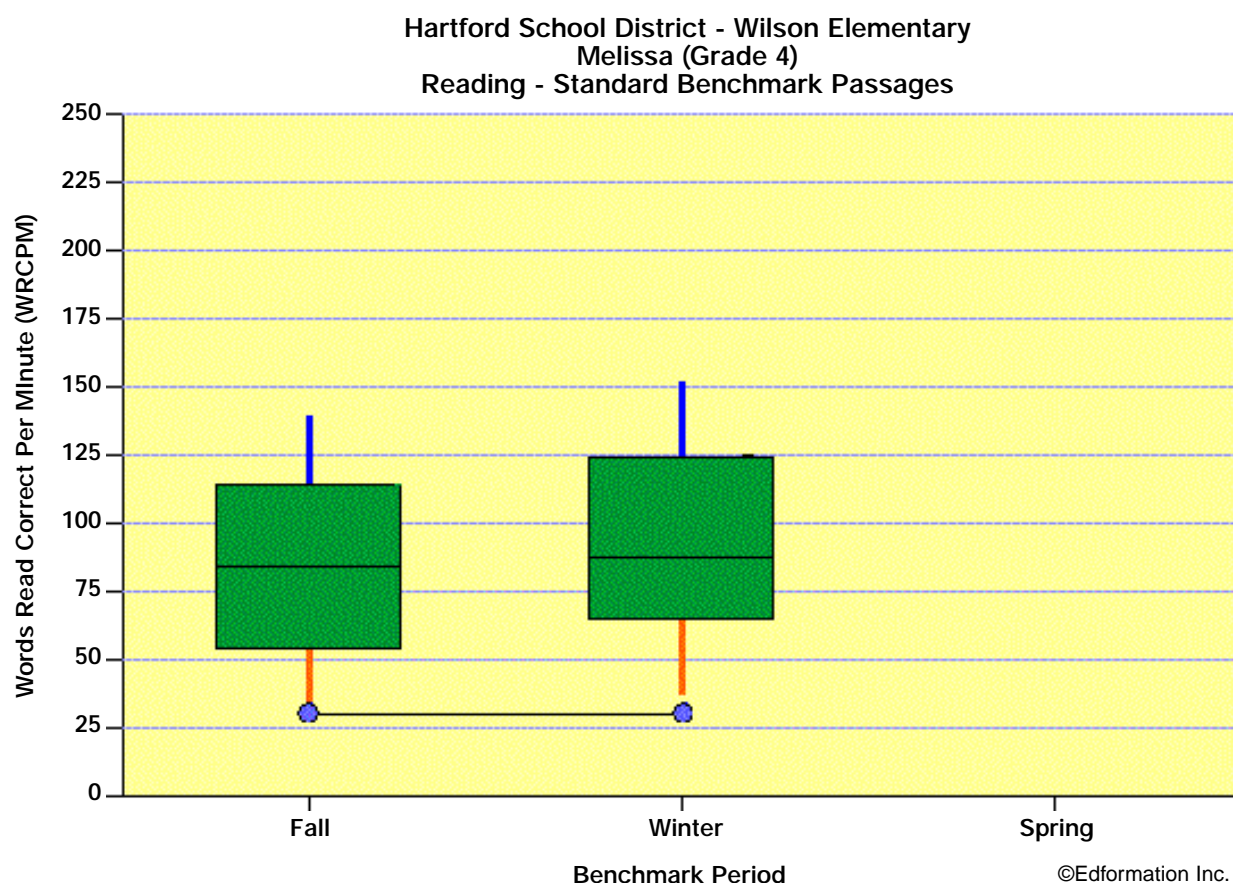
Frequent formative evaluation requires the use of standard assessment tools sufficiently often enough that teachers can make timely changes when students are not improving. Benchmark testing, described in the second *AIMSweb* workbook, Administration and Scoring of Reading Curriculum-Based Measurement (R-CBM) for Use in General Outcome Measurement, is conducted 3 times per year, allowing teachers to make data based, and meaningful changes in their instruction 1-2 times per year. Frequent formative evaluation may be as often as twice per week, ranging in some cases to once per month. When the progress of students with severe educational needs is monitored weekly, teachers can make 5-6 meaningful instructional changes should they be necessary to improve instructional outcomes.

More Severe Achievement Problems and/or More Resource Intensive Programs Require More Frequent Formative Evaluation

For most general education students, the formative evaluation frequency provided by *AIMSweb Benchmark* is sufficient to enable important and timely instructional decisions to be made. Additionally, for typically achieving, and above-average students, the consequences of some period of lack of progress, although undesirable, are less serious. Sheriann, an above average fourth-grade student who has not progressed in reading from the Fall to Winter Benchmark, will have received an instructional program that may not have been working for her for about 10-12 weeks. By the time her lack of progress has been documented and a change in her reading program is made, there is still a possibility that she could become an average or above average reader. Her Fall to Winter to Spring Benchmark Report is shown in Figure 1 on the next page.

Figure 1: Sheriann's Fall to Winter to Spring Benchmark Results

In contrast, Melissa is a very low-performing fourth-grade student whose Fall to Winter Benchmark is shown in Figure 2, on the next page. She began the year as an At Risk reader and has improved her reading performance. By Winter, she is now a reader with a severe performance discrepancy.

Figure 2: Melissa's Fall to Winter Benchmark Results

The instructional program Melissa received was not benefiting her and in her case, this is important lost time. Because she had already experienced difficulty reading, or even failure, teachers need to minimize the time that Melissa spends in programs that are not working. Teachers can do this by using more frequent progress monitoring to make adjustments more often than once or twice per year.

Melissa's progress may need to be monitored formatively more frequently, perhaps 1-2 times per week so that teachers can evaluate her progress and adjust her reading program every 4-6 weeks.

Programs that are more resource intensive (e.g., higher cost per student, higher teacher-student ratios, experimental programs) such as Title I, English Language Learning or Special Education also should monitor student outcomes more frequently than the benchmark testing schedule. Many of these programs serve students with identified educational needs or who are at risk for failure. Because of the problem severity of these students, frequent progress monitoring is good practice. Importantly, because of the resource-intensive nature of these programs, there is also an increased amount of accountability. Metaphorically, then, we can think of the types of students and the kinds of services they receive as the educational equivalents of medical "intensive care units." Like patients in the intensive care unit, we know that the "standard" intervention is not sufficient for these students, and that a more powerful instructional program is required.

Correspondingly, as educators, we should use an evaluation system like that of the intensive care unit, where hospitals monitor vital signs such as heart rate, blood pressure, and temperature frequently, if not

continuously. We need to be able to assess educational “*vital signs*” with sufficient frequency and accuracy that we can judge our students’ academic health and response to our intensive treatments to ensure that they are improving.

Formative Evaluation of Vital Signs Requires Quality Tools

We have detailed in the two previous workbooks the need for quality measures of educational *vital signs* for formative evaluation. Frequent formative evaluation requires the use of repeated tests of equal difficulty over time. Preferably, these tests will be short so that they will not reduce precious instructional time for students with educational needs.

Not just any “short” test will do. Although we want to make frequent formative evaluation as easy as possible for teachers and keep testing time as short as possible, the tests we use must have the critical features described by Fuchs and Fuchs (1999):

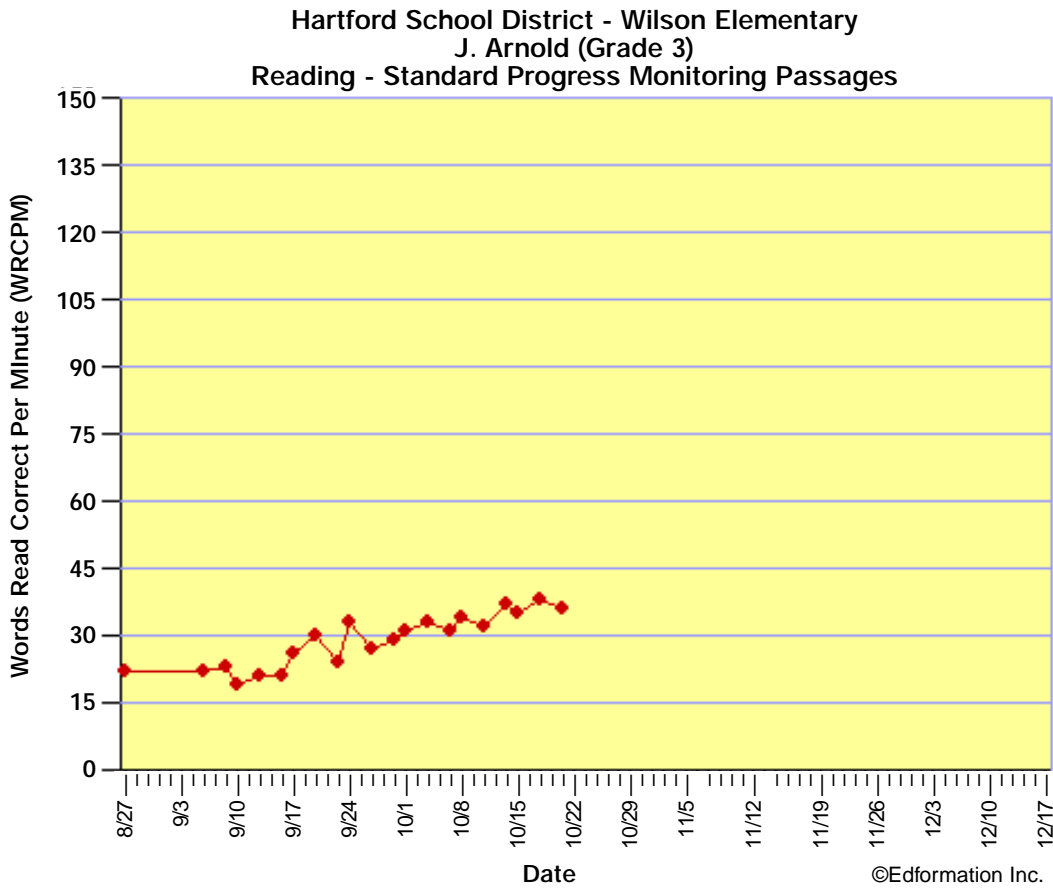
1. Technical adequacy (reliability and validity);
2. Capacity to model growth (able to represent student achievement growth within and across academic years);
3. Treatment sensitivity (scores should change when students are learning);
4. Independence from specific instructional techniques (instructionally eclectic so the system can be used with any type of instruction or curriculum);
5. Capacity to inform teaching (should provide information to help teachers improve instruction);
6. Feasibility (must be doable).

The General Outcome Measures (GOMs), including Curriculum-Based Measurement, used in the **AIMSweb Systems** were designed specifically to match these characteristics and to be used in frequent formative evaluation. More information on research evidence regarding the **AIMSweb** assessment measures can be found in the journal articles and book chapters listed in the Appendix and in the **Standard Reading Assessment Passages Technical Manual** (Howe & M.M. Shinn, 2002).

Formative Evaluation is Impossible without Clear Goals

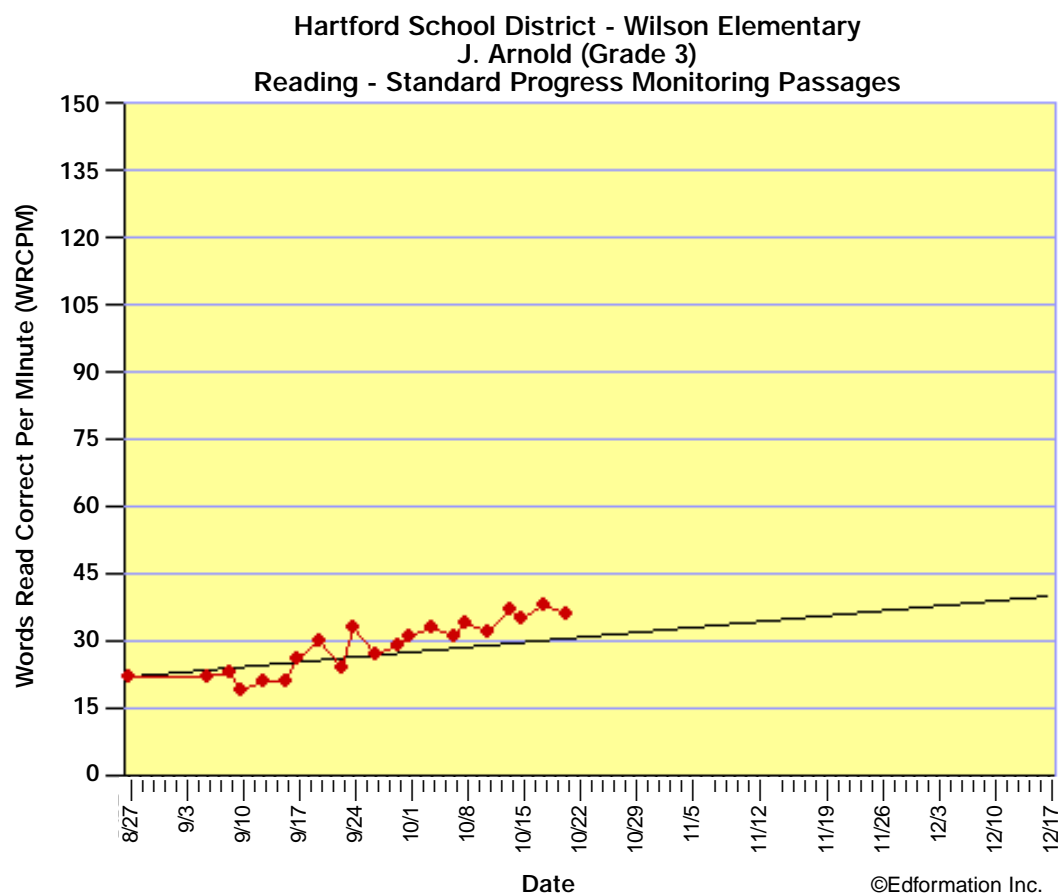
As in any human endeavor, it is difficult to know “how you’re doing” unless you have an idea of “how well you want to do.” Take a look at J. Arnold’s performance over a 10-week period in Figure 3. J. Arnold was identified by his teacher, Ms. Jackson, as an at risk reader. Ms. Jackson therefore decided to monitor J. Arnold’s progress more frequently than would be provided by benchmark testing. When we measure J’s progress 2 times per week with **Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages** we can see his scores are going up. But is this rate of progress “satisfactory?” Only by interpreting J. Arnold’s progress relative to a goal can we make that decision.

Figure 3: Results of J. Arnold's Frequent Progress Monitoring Over a 10-Week Period



Now look at Figure 4, on the next page.

Notice J. Arnold's rate of progress relative to a Goal Line that extends from his initial performance (about 22 WRC per minute) on these graded-passages to his first quarter goal of reading 40 WRC per minute.

Figure 4: J. Arnold's Rate of Progress Compared to a Goal

Procedures describing how to set goals like this will be described later in the workbook. It seems clear that while J. Arnold's initial rate of progress was below the rate of progress he needed to meet his goal, at around 9/24, his rate of progress changed dramatically. This conclusion could be reached at the time of the last progress monitoring testing around 10/22, J. Arnold was on track to meet his first-quarter goal. Furthermore, he was making a greater rate of progress than expected. Under these circumstances, J. Arnold's teacher could feel confident that the reading instruction was working. Therefore, it is logical that good formative evaluation of any kind requires goals.

For some of the students that we serve, there also is a legal mandate that we set goals. Students who receive special education are to have an individualized educational plan (IEP) that includes annual goals. Finally, goal setting in systematic formative evaluation has been demonstrated to improve student achievement meaningfully with low performing students (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1986). Therefore, there are empirical reasons to write goals.

Unfortunately, despite legal requirements for goals setting for many students, the scientific studies of goals' impact on student achievement, information on how to write quality goals and the factors contributing to quality, many of us in education do not value the process of setting goals. The reference list at the end of the workbook provides just a small sample of the readings that can help us to understand and write quality goals for frequent measurement.

Despite the body of knowledge represented by these references, in today's educational practice, the goals that influence our work as teachers too often have been set by others unfamiliar with this information and unfamiliar with instructional demands and resources. Often, these goals appear to be infinite in number, with hundreds or even thousands of goals to be attained if we are to be judged successful as teachers.

Often the goals are not linked to the assessment methods that are used to evaluate goal attainment. We write them, but we don't measure them. Equally often, the goals are not measurable at all. For example, how does one measure "appreciate the value of reading.?" Finally, goals are often seen as a procedural exercise that we must engage in to meet the needs of a system, not necessarily to improve the quality of services that students receive. For more detail on the history of, current practices in, setting academic goals, see M.R. and M.M. Shinn (2000).

Nowhere is the distaste for goals more evident than in the process of writing IEPs for students with severe academic needs. Recently we came across *IEPs According to Dr. Seuss*, on the Internet. Excerpts are as follows:

Do you like these IEPs?
 I do not like these IEPs
 I do not like them Jeeze Louise
 We test, we check
 We plan, we meet
 But nothing ever seems complete.
 Would you, could you
 Like the form?
 I do not like the form I see
 Not page 1, not 2, not 3
 Another change
 A brand new box
 I think we all
 Have lost our rocks.

Improving the Process of Setting Goals for Formative Evaluation

Despite what may be widespread dissatisfaction with the current state of writing goals, we are confident that any sense of negativism and dissatisfaction can be offset if we:

1. Set a few, but important goals.
2. Ensure goals are measurable and linked to validated formative evaluation practices.
3. Base goal setting on logical educational practices.

Few, but Important Goals

Because most of us have not been trained to write goals and we encounter legal and/or political pressures to write them, we have adopted a "smorgasbord" (more is better), almost haphazard approach to setting goals. We write as many goals as are necessary to fill in the blanks on the forms for procedural compliance.

Thus we see any number of combinations of some of the “goals” below that were written for students at risk or identified with severe educational needs.

1. Student will perform spelling skills at a high 3rd grade level.
2. Student will alphabetize words by the second letter with 80% accuracy.
3. Student will read words from the Dolch Word List with 80% accuracy.
4. Student will master basic multiplication facts with 80% accuracy.
5. Student will increase reading skills by progressing through Scribner with 90% accuracy as determined by teacher-made fluency and comprehension probes by October 2003.
6. Student will increase reading ability by 6 months to 1 year as measured by the Woodcock Johnson.
7. Student will make one year's growth in reading by October 1990 as measured by the Brigance.
8. Student will be a better reader.
9. Student will read aloud with 80% accuracy and 80% comprehension.
10. Student will make one year's gain in general reading from K-3.
11. Students will read 1 story per week.

We have little empirical evidence that writing goals like these will lead to (1) systematic formative evaluation, (2) any evaluation at all, or (3) improved educational outcomes. Furthermore, we have no evidence that writing large numbers of these kinds of goals accomplishes anything for teachers and students alike.

In *AIMSweb Progress Monitor*, one critical general outcome goal is written for each basic skill area in which there is an academic need in formats as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Basic Formats for Writing Meaningful Progress Monitoring Goals

Area	Goal Format
Reading	In (#) weeks (Student name) will read (#) Words Correctly in 1 minute from randomly selected Grade (#) passages.
Spelling	In (#) weeks (Student name) will write (#) Correct Letter Sequences and (#) Correct Words in 2 minutes from randomly selected Grade (#) spelling lists.
Early Literacy	In (#) weeks (Student name) will read (#) Nonsense Words Correctly presented with randomly selected list of nonsense words.

Although there may be variations in specific wording, or word order, these goal formats form the basis for writing the individualized goals that are necessary for frequent formative evaluation.

Let's examine two students' goals more carefully. For Leonardo, a fifth-grade student with a severe reading deficit, who is receiving no special education, the goal may be written as:

In 32 weeks, Leonardo will read 125 words read correctly with less than 5 errors from Grade 3 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

For Hester, a second-grade student who has been identified as at risk by her classroom teacher and who is receiving Title I, the goal may be written as:

In 30 weeks, Hester will read 85 words read correctly with less than 3 errors from Grade 2 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

In each instance, a single important goal is written (and progress evaluated). This goal represents the outcome of many complex reading skills that must be learned. This type of goal-setting process is like a company's use of Earnings Per Share. Company A may have as their annual goal to stockholders that they earn \$3.25 per share. Attainment of this outcome will represent the successful accomplishment of many complex activities (e.g., product development, advertising, sales, transportation, customer support, plant maintenance, etc.). The goals written as part of **AIMSweb Progress Monitor** are designed to operate the same way as Earnings Per Share: to give a standard to aim for that is a critical and general indicator of overall achievement.

Ensure the Goals are Measurable and Linked to Validated Formative Evaluation Practices

Leonardo's and Hester's goals are obviously measurable using quality tests (i.e., that are reliable and valid), Reading Curriculum-Based Measurement (R-CBM). Their goals are also linked to validated formative evaluation practices such as those incorporated into **AIMSweb Progress Monitor**. Their teachers can monitor their progress frequently (perhaps twice per week for Leonardo and once every 2 weeks for Hester) and make instructional adjustments if they are not on track to reach the goals. If Leonardo and Hester attain their goals, their teachers and parents can be confident that they both have become qualitatively better readers.

Base Goal Setting on Logical Educational Practices

Good goal-setting practices should reflect logical educational practices. That is, teachers, parents, and students should be able to understand what the goals are and why we set them the way we do. To know where we want a student to be in the future, we must start by knowing where the student is performing currently. We need to know how long we have to attain our goal and we need to know what the student is expected to do when the goal is attained. We can examine the link to logical educational practices by "taking apart" Leonardo's goal as shown in Table 2 on the next page:

Table 2: Examining Leonardo's Goals through Logical Educational Practices

Current Information Leonardo currently reads about 15 words correctly in Grade 5 reading passages. He reads Grade 1 reading passages successfully; 68 words correctly, which is how well end-of-first-grade students read this material.	
Goal	Educational Practice
In 32 weeks	Leonardo receives special education. This timeframe corresponds to the length in school weeks of his annual IEP.
Leonardo will read 125 words read correctly with less than 5 errors	This is how well typical end-of-the year third-graders read at his school. The goal writers wanted Leonardo to be able to read Grade 3 connected text as well as other third-graders in his school.
from Grade 3 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages	This is the level of reading material that the goal writers wanted Leonardo to read successfully.

By knowing (1) what Leonardo reads successfully now, (2) determining how successful we would like him to be, teachers and parents have a straightforward, educationally logical way of setting goals, (3) determining where we would like him to be successful.

We can examine the link to logical educational practices for Hester, a student with a less severe reading problem, by taking apart her goal as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Examining Hester's Goals through Logical Educational Practices

Current Information Hester currently reads 22 WRC in Grade 2 material which places her in the lowest 20% of students in her grade in her school. She reads Grade 1 reading passages successfully, 40 words correctly, which is in the low average range of end end-of-grade students.	
Goal	Educational Practice
In 30 weeks	This is the amount of time left in Hester's academic year.
Hester will read 85 words read correctly with less than 5 errors	This is how well typical end-of-the year second-graders read at this school. Hester's teacher and parents wanted her to be an average reader compared to other second-graders in her school.
from Grade 2 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages	This is the level of reading material that other second graders will be reading at the end of the year.

Goals are Collective Statements About What We Can Accomplish and What Resources We Are Devoting to the Student

Writing goals is not just a statement about what we expect the student to accomplish. It also is a statement about the power or impact of our instructional programs. If we write goals that are easily accomplished (i.e., that are un-ambitious) we are institutionalizing low expectations for students and indirectly suggesting the instructional programs we provide are not very powerful. A body of evidence strongly suggests a relation between how ambitious our goals are and student achievement. If we error, we should be over-ambitious rather than un-ambitious.

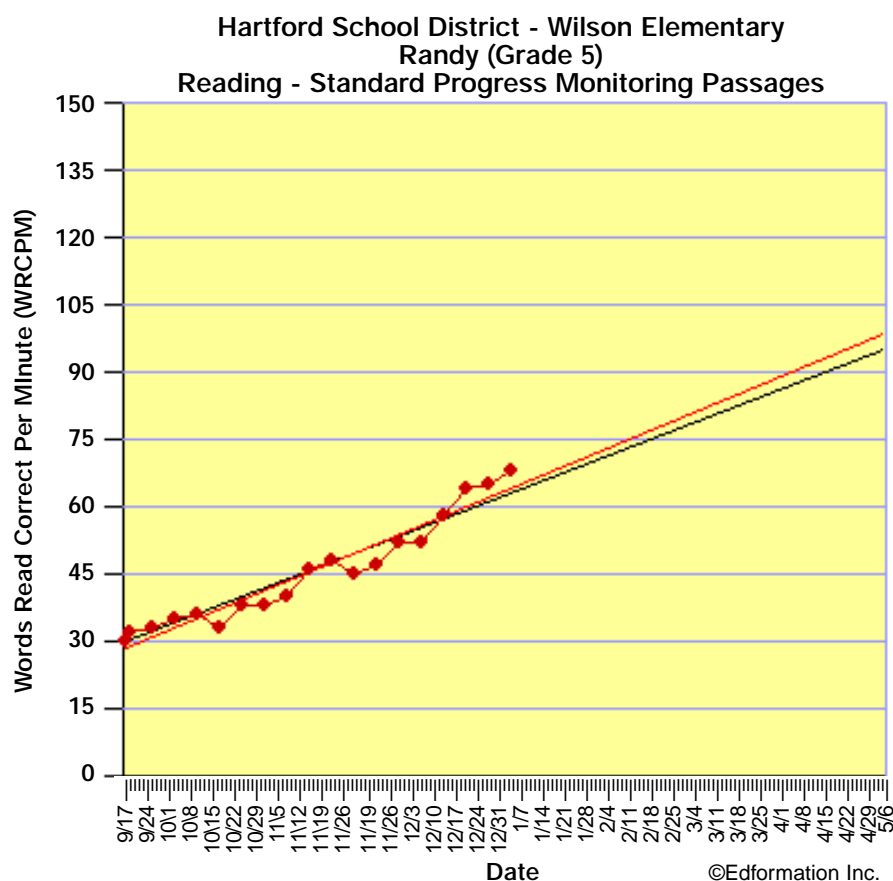
With students at risk or with severe educational need, we have generated an atmosphere where ambitious student goals are considered absurd. We argue that we created this atmosphere by not having good technology to write goals and monitor progress. The problem has been compounded by lack of goal-setting training.

The prevailing goal-setting technology, where goals are written based on commercial achievement tests and students' progress is tested annually against those goals, has resulted in too many instances of failure for teachers. However, the problem may not be that students failed to improve appreciably, but that the tests that were used to measure progress were not designed to detect changes in student achievement. This lack of sensitivity to student achievement is made worse when grade-equivalents are used as the score to judge progress. Furthermore, writing un-ambitious goals becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy for the students. Attainment of low goals suggests "lower ability" to teachers who then write more un-ambitious goals, etc.

The goal-setting and progress-monitoring technology reflected in *AIMSweb Progress Monitor (AIMSweb PM)* was designed to remediate these known deficits in current practice. As educators, we should try to cast aside our old history about goal setting and progress monitoring and set goals that reflect meaningful student growth and the power and confidence we have in our instruction.

The graph in Figure 5 on the next page is an *AIMSweb PM* graph for a student with a severe reading performance discrepancy. The student, Randy S., was a student in fifth grade who read successfully in second-grade material. The annual goal for Randy was to read 95 WRC in 1 minute from Grade 4 *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages*. The student began the program reading 30 WRC in 1 minute from Grade 4 *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages*. In other words, the student had to improve 65 WRC or an improvement rate of about 2 WRC per week. Although Randy had a severe reading performance discrepancy, his rate of progress corresponded to the ambitious goal that was written for him.

Figure 5: Randy's Rate of Progress toward the Annual Goal



Goals Setting Strategies: Begin with the Survey Level Assessment (SLA)

Writing individualized goals for at risk students or for students with severe educational needs requires four decisions to be made. First, educators must know students' **current performance** or the skill level at which they are currently successful. For example, a fifth-grade special education student may currently be successful in second-grade reading material, reading 60 WRC on Grade 2 passages. Second, educators must **decide the time frame** for the goal. For example, with students who are receiving special education, the time frame typically is an annual one. Third, educators must **determine a future performance level** at which the student would be performing within the specified time frame. The fifth-grade special education student currently successful in second-grade reading material may be expected to be successful in fourth-grade material in 1 year. Fourth, educators **must set a standard** for successful performance. The fifth-grade special education student in this example may be expected to read 95 WRC from fourth-grade reading material.

The cornerstone for obtaining the necessary information to make these decisions is the **Survey-Level Assessment (SLA)**. SLA is an assessment process where students are tested in successive levels of general curriculum, beginning with their current expected grade placement, until a level at which they are successful is determined.

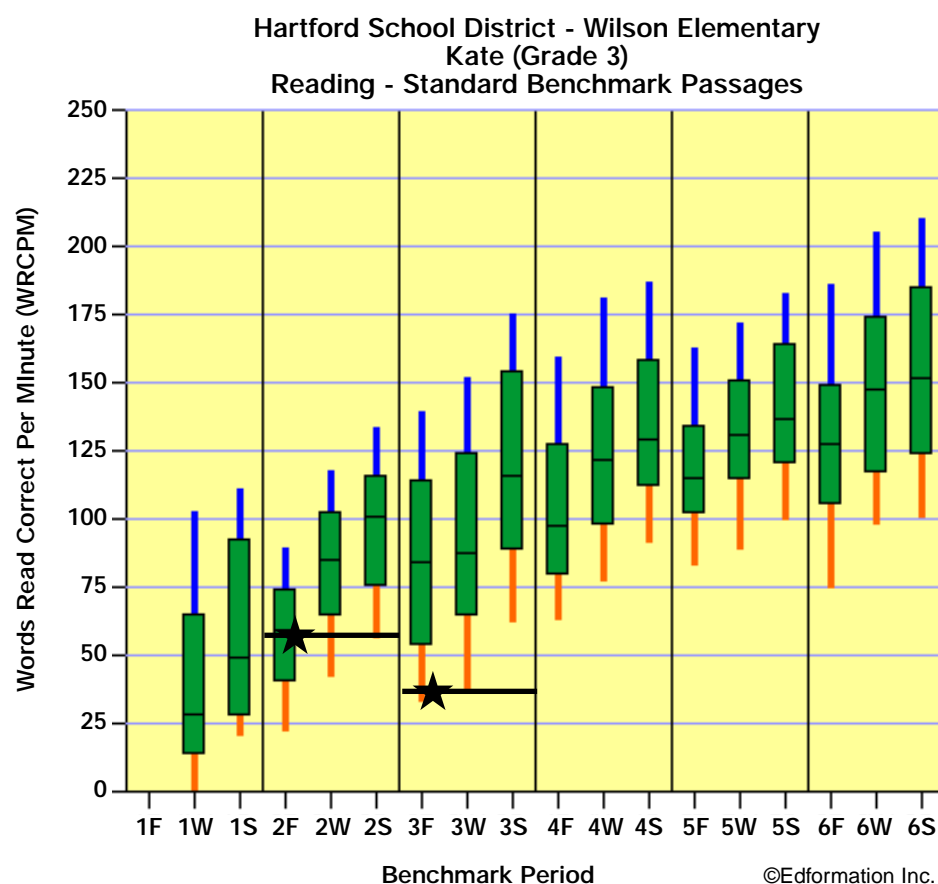
A sample SLA with Kate, a third grader identified at the Fall Benchmark as at risk by her teacher, is shown in Table 4 on the next page.

Table 4: Reading Survey-Level Assessment for Kate, A Third-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
3	35/6	37/5	50/8	37/6	At Risk Reader
2	60/4	58/3	42/7	58/4	Average Reader

Kate's teacher entered her Fall Benchmark reading scores on the Survey-Level Assessment table above, including the median. Kate's Grade 3 scores were consistently in the range of an at risk reader in her school district (or school). To determine her level of success, Kate's teacher then had her read 3 passages from the Grade 2 *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages*. This testing took approximately 5 minutes and Kate's 3 scores were entered on the SLA Table. Her scores were consistently those of an Average Reader in her school district. Therefore, her current level of performance would be Grade 2. She read Grade 2 reading passages as well as other second-graders in her school district (or school).

Kate's SLA results also could be graphed. In this instance, her scores are graphed against the results of last year's Benchmarks for the school district.

Figure 6: Graph of Kate's SLA Results Compared to Last Year's Benchmark Results

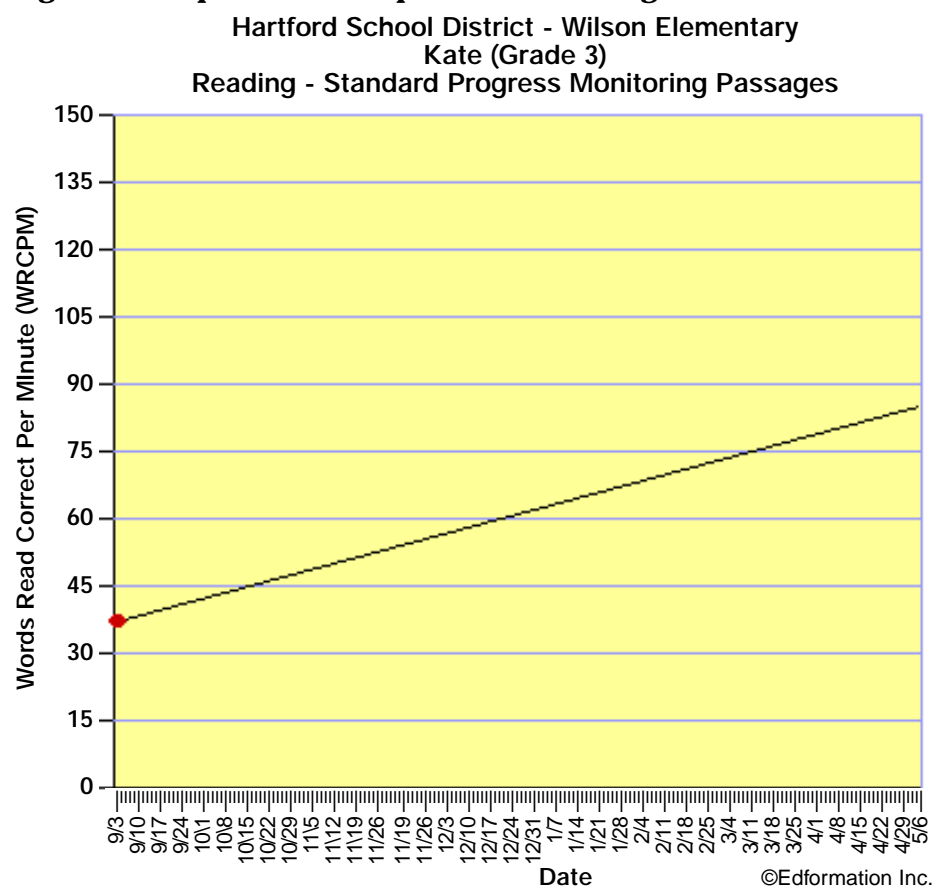
Kate's teacher used these SLA results to write the following annual goal for use in *AIMSweb PM*.

In 32 weeks (by the end of the school year), Kate will read 85 words read correctly with less than 3 errors from Grade 3 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Kate's teacher decided that with some changes in her instructional program, by the end of the year (the time frame), Kate could be reading as well as a typical mid-year third grader in the school district. Therefore, she chose Grade 3 passages as Kate's future performance level. The standard for success was defined as the number of WRC that a typical mid-year third grader would read on Grade 3 passages or as shown in Figure 6 on page 16, 85 WRC. Because high accuracy was desired, Kate's teacher also included an error rate that would require at least 95% accuracy.

Kate's goal would be entered into **AIMSweb PM** and would show her expected rate of progress based on the graph as shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Graph of Kate's Expected Rate of Progress



Kate's progress would be monitored once per week by giving her 1 randomly selected passage from the pool of Grade 3 passages specified by the **AIMSweb PM** assessment schedule.

The second example shows SLA results and the individualized goal for Ginny, a sixth-grader who receives special education for 2 hours per day. Her SLA is shown in Table 5.

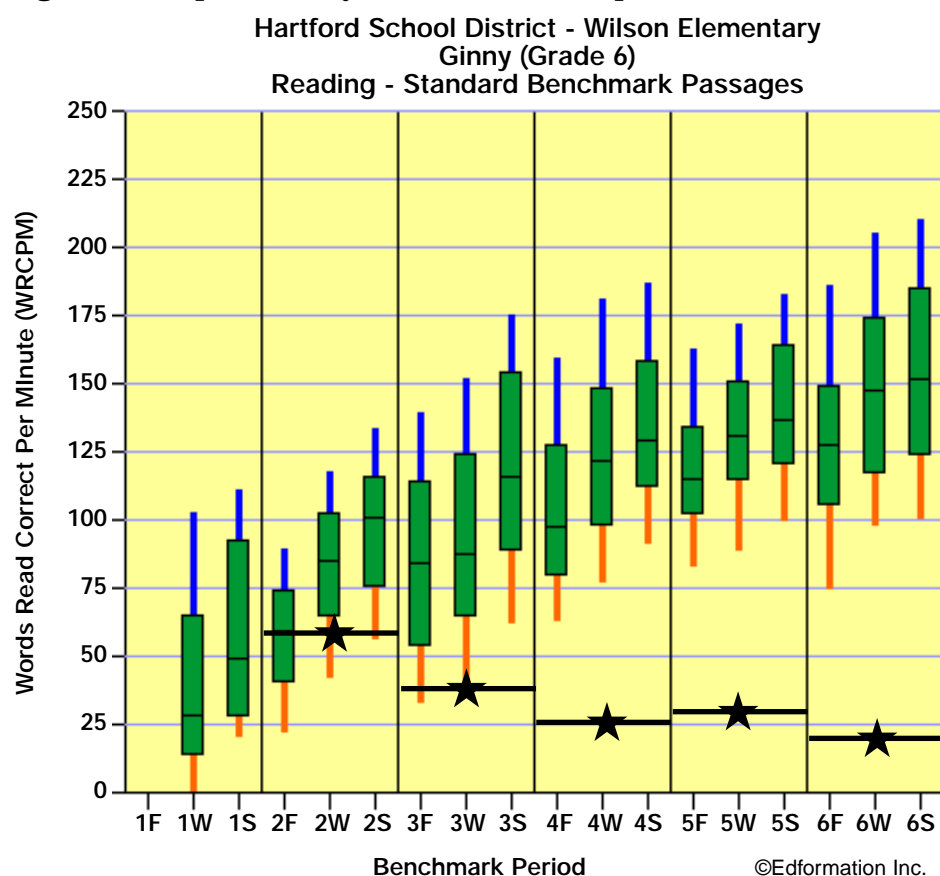
Table 5: Reading Survey-Level Assessment for Ginny, A Sixth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
6	12/12	19/8	21/3	19/8	Severe Reading Problem
5	30/6	28/6	35/6	30/6	Severe Reading Problem
4	19/6	26/3	25/3	25/3	Severe Reading Problem
3	35/6	40/2	44/1	40/2	At Risk Reader
2	65/2	62/0	83/1	65/2	Average Reader

Ginny's teacher entered her Fall Benchmark reading scores on the Survey-Level Assessment table above, including the median. As might be expected, Ginny's scores were those of a student with a severe reading problem in her school district (or school). To determine her level of success, Ginny's teacher then had her read 3 passages from each level of the *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages*, starting at Grade 5, until she was considered successful. This testing took approximately 5 minutes per level for a total of 25 minutes. Ginny's scores then were entered on the SLA Table. Her current level of performance would be Grade 2. She read Grade 2 reading passages as well as other second-graders in her school district (or school).

Ginny's SLA results also were graphed against the results of last year's Benchmarks for the school district as shown in Figure 8 on the next page..

Figure 8: Graph of Ginny's SLA Results Compared to Last Year's Benchmark Results

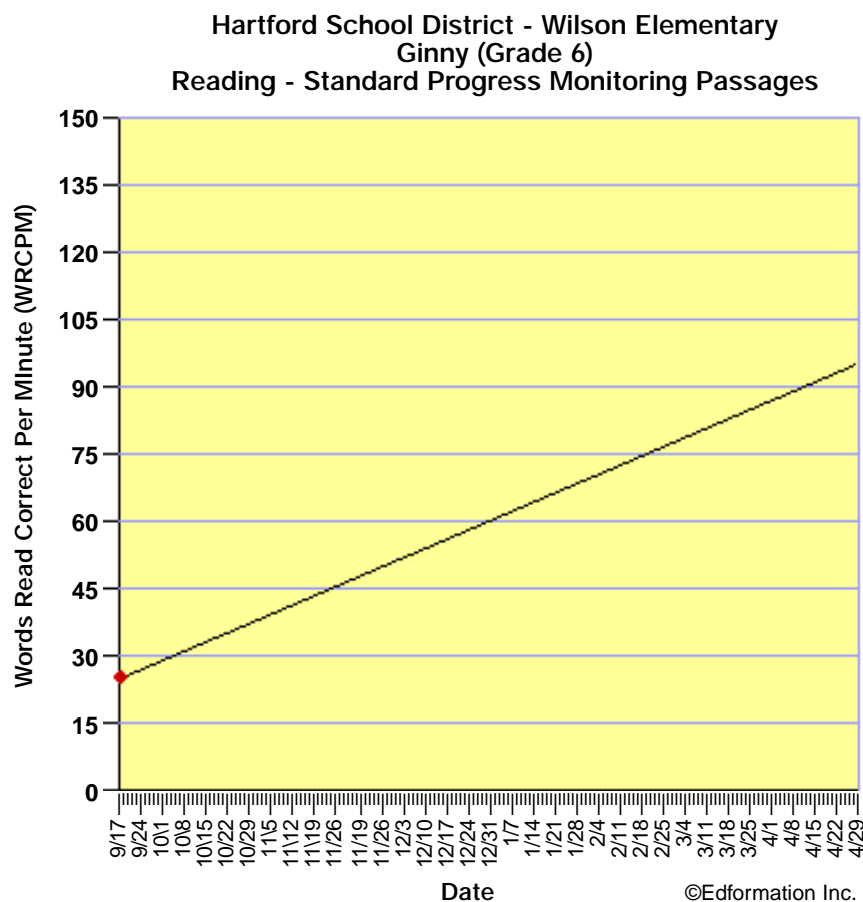


Ginny's IEP team used these SLA results to write the following IEP annual goal.

In 34 weeks (1 year), Ginny will read 95 words read correctly with less than 3 errors from Grade 4 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

The IEP team decided that with special education, by the time of her annual IEP review (the time frame), Ginny would be reading as well as a typical beginning-of-the-year fourth grader in the school district. Therefore, the IEP team chose Grade 4 passages as Ginny's future performance level. The standard for success was defined as the number of WRC that a typical beginning-of-the-year fourth grader would read on Grade 4 passages or as shown in Figure 8, 95 WRC. Because high accuracy was desired, the IEP team included an error rate that would require at least 95% accuracy.

Ginny's goal would be entered into **AIMSweb PM** that would show her expected rate of progress based on the graph as shown in Figure 9 on the next page.

Figure 9: Graph of Ginny's Expected Rate of Progress

Ginny's progress would be monitored twice per week by giving her 1 randomly selected passage each time from the pool of Grade 4 passages specified by the *AIMSweb PM* assessment schedule.

Survey-Level Assessment Exercises

This section of the workbook provides practice in conducting a Survey-Level Assessment (SLA) with 2 students. Both students are fourth-graders. A complete SLA is conducted in the first case, Amber. Samples of the SLA for Matt, also a fourth grader, compose the second example.

Example — AMBER-GRADE 4

Table 6: Reading Survey-Level Assessment for Amber, a Fourth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
4	57/6	51/8	32/9	51/8	Severe Reading Problem
3	89/2	74/3	68/6	74/3	Average Reader

Amber's Fall Benchmark scores were evidence of a severe reading problem as compared to other fourth graders in her school district. The student support team decided that because of the reading performance discrepancy, the standard reading program in Amber's classroom likely would not result in meaningful improvement. It was decided that Amber would receive some additional Title I services and that her progress would be monitored weekly using *AIMSweb PM*. To establish an individualized goal for frequent progress monitoring, Amber's teacher completed the SLA as shown in Table 6. We will see what Amber's teacher saw in the Fall Benchmark assessment and the follow-up SLA. It is assumed that the workbook user is well practiced in administration of the R-GOM.

Amber reads three Grade 4 *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages*. Her WRC and errors are below.

Grade 4 Example Passage 1

There was a great oak tree that stood on the corner of Colorado Street. All the	16
local kids knew and loved the oak tree. They met there on evenings after school and	32
on humid summer nights. The great oak was the headquarters for their clubs and the	47
safe place for their games of tag and hide-and-seek. As long as the tree stood on	65
the corner of Colorado Street, the children would have a place to meet and dream.	80

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 300 WORDS Score: 57 WRC/ 6 Errors

Grade 4 Example Passage 2

Jenny's father often went on business trips. Sometimes he was gone for only a	14
few days. Other times he was gone for entire weeks. Even though he called every	29
night, Jenny still missed her father. She was happy when he would finally come	43
home.	44
Jenny always rushed to the front door when she heard her father's taxi approach	58
the driveway. She would wait for him to open the door and jump into his arms.	74
"How's my girl?" her dad always asked as he gave her a big hug. "Did you miss	91
me?"	92

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 250 WORDS Score: 51WRC/ 8 Errors

Grade 4 Example Passage 3

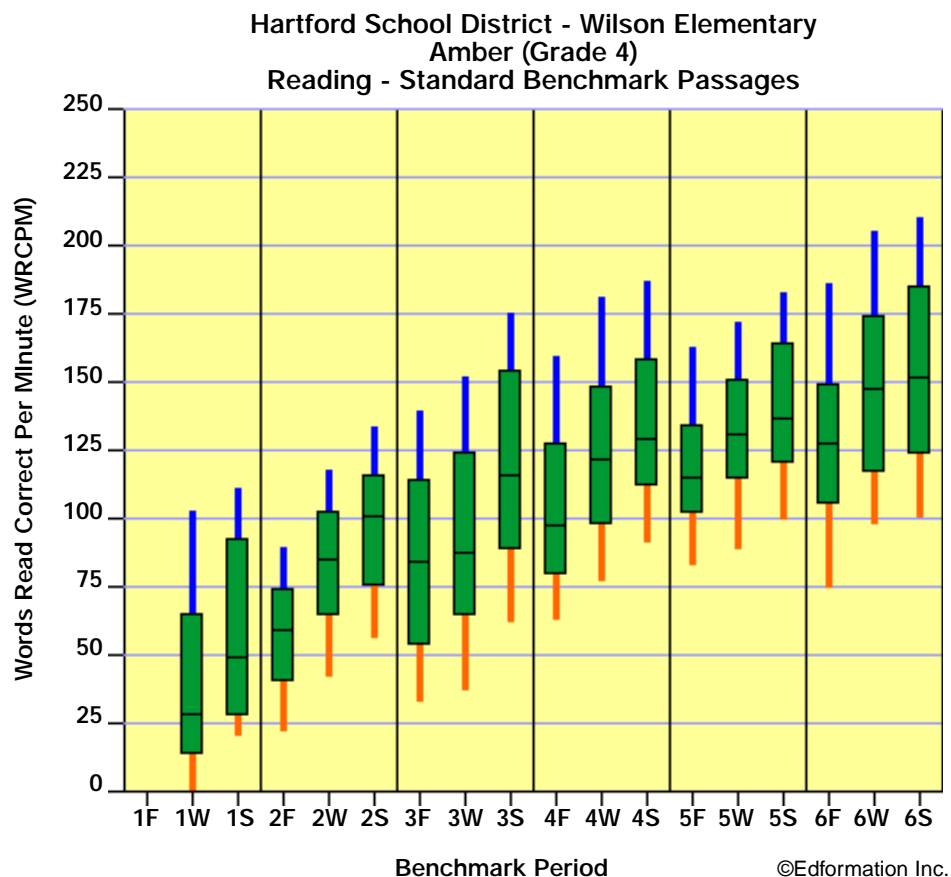
Along the seashore of Florida, the Gulf of Mexico's waves lapped up on the	14
sand. In a secluded cove, a pack of boys who called themselves the Coral Cove	29
Gang hunted for treasures. These five boys spent their summer days combing the	42
beaches of their town. Their beach searches rewarded them with interesting	53
discoveries, including pieces of driftwood and sea glass, conch shells, lost jewelry	65
and coins, and occasionally a deserted fishing boat. The boys kept three salvaged boats	79
tied to an anchor in a secluded area about a mile from their homes.	93

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 250 WORDS Score: 32 WRC/ 9 Errors

(1) Record Amber's, Fall Scores in the SLA Table below, (2) calculate the Median, (3) make a ★ for her WRC on the graph of last year's Benchmark Scores for the District, and (4) describe her Fall Performance Level.

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
4					

Figure 10: Graph Amber's Grade 4 Performance Against Grade 4 Benchmarks



Describe Amber's Current Performance Here:

Because Amber was not successful in Reading Grade 4 passages, her teacher decided a SLA was needed to help plan and administered 3 Grade 3 passages.

Amber reads three *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages* from Grade 3. Her WRC and errors are below.

Grade 3 Example Passage 1

Kim loved the new paper dolls her aunt gave to her. She found a cardboard box	16
and stored them neatly beneath her bed. Kim couldn't wait until the weekend when	30
she would have time to play with them.	38
On Saturday morning, Kim finally had a chance to play with her new paper dolls.	53
"Kim, it's time for lunch!" her mother called from the kitchen. "Put your dolls	67
away. You can dress them up later." Kim placed the paper dolls in their box. She	83
slid the box under her bed.	89
About an hour later, Kim returned and brought out the doll box again. She	103
opened the box and gasped in surprise. The dolls were not in the box.	117

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 250 WORDS Score: 89 WRC/ 2 Errors

Grade 3 Example Passage 2

Jason and Max picked next Friday to carry out their special mission. Friday was a	15
week away. They had so many things to accomplish. In order to reach their final	30
goal, the boys made a plan for each day of the week. They had to work hard every	48
day to finish each task. Could they do it all?	58
On Monday, they agreed to meet and put plan A into action. Plan A was to gather as	76
many fallen branches as they could carry. They hauled the wood from the edge of the	92
cornfield and stacked it in a big pile at the edge of the forest.	106

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 250 WORDS Score: 74 WRC/ 3 Errors

Grade 3 Example Passage 3

Out of all the beetles in the woods, Betsy Beetle had the most beautiful shell.	15
Betsy's shell was as green as the leaves on the trees. It was covered with tiny flecks	32
of gold that looked like stars. It shimmered as if it were wet.	45
Betsy was always down at the lake, scrubbing and polishing her shell. "A bug	59
has to keep up her looks," Betsy would tell all the other beetles. "We were given	75
such great shells. We might as well keep them nice and shiny."	87

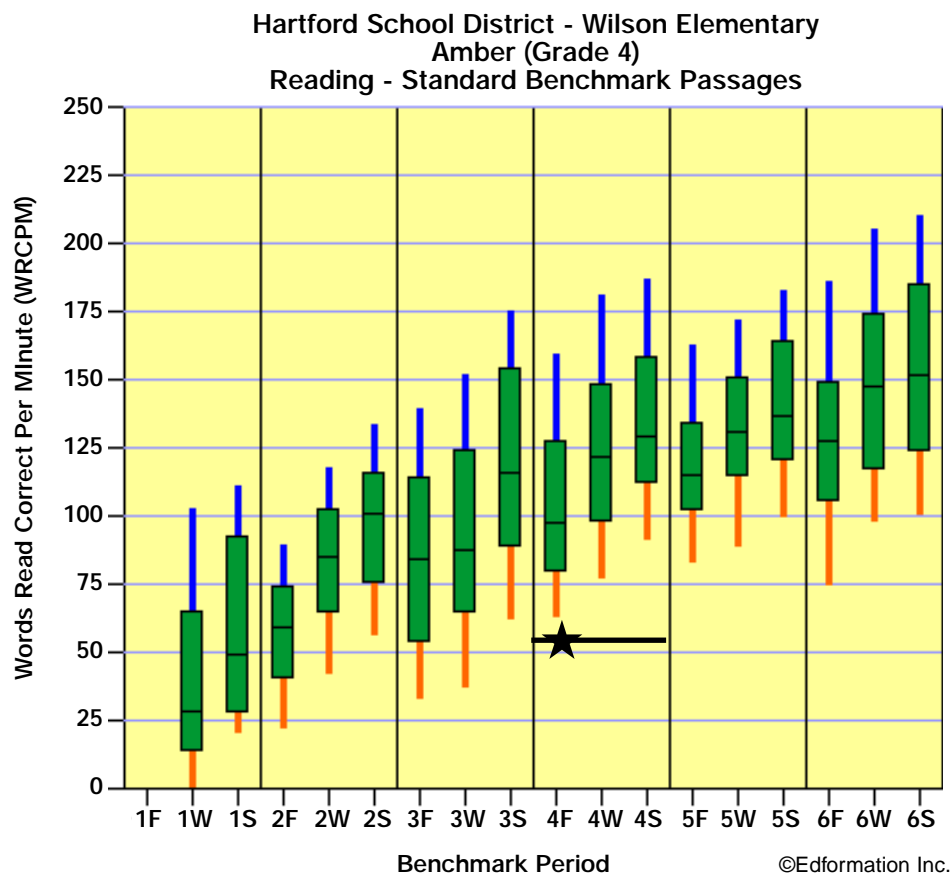
PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 250 WORDS Score: 67 WRC/ 7 Errors

(1) Record Amber's, Fall Scores in the SLA Table below, (2) calculate the Median, (3) make a ★ for her WRC on the graph of last year's Benchmark Scores for the District, and (4) describe her Fall Performance Level.

Reading Survey-Level Assessment for Amber, A Fourth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
4	57/6	51/8	32/9	51/8	Severe Reading Problem
3					

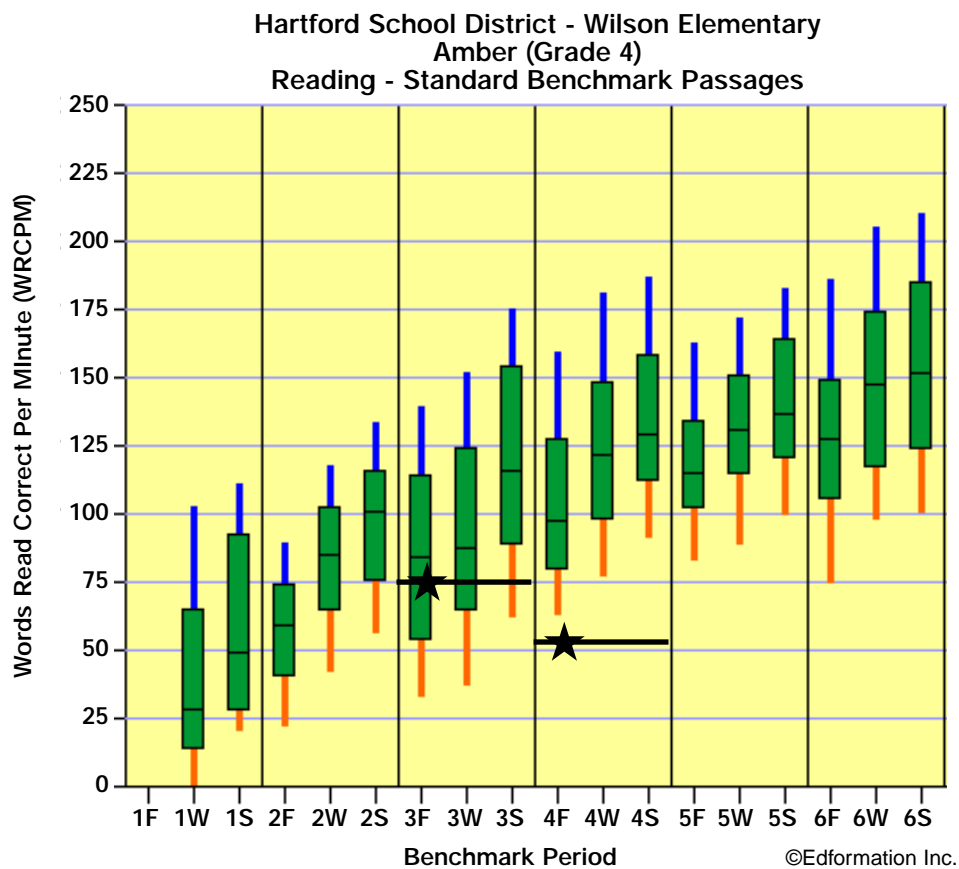
Figure 11: Graph Amber's Grade 3 SLA Results Against Grade 3 Benchmarks



Describe Amber's Grade 3 Reading Here:

Table 7: Reading SLA Results for Amber

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
4	57/6	51/8	32/9	51/8	Severe Reading Problem
3	89/2	74/3	67/7	74/3	Average Reader

Figure 12: Graph of Amber's SLA Results

Questions to Answer:

1. What differences did you notice between Amber's reading of Grade 3 and Grade 4 Passages?
2. Is this a severe performance discrepancy?
3. What would you write as Amber's individualized goal?

Amber's teacher used the SLA results to write the following annual goal for use in *AIMSweb PM*.

In 32 weeks (by the end of the school year), Amber will read 120 words read correctly with less than 3 errors from Grade 4 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages

Amber's teacher decided that there was not a severe performance discrepancy because Amber was successful when reading passages only 1 grade below her current grade placement. With some changes in her instructional program, by the end of the year (the time frame), Amber would be reading as well as a typical mid-year fourth grader in the school district (120 WRC). Therefore, the teacher chose Grade 4 passages as her future performance level. The standard for success was defined as the number of WRC that a typical mid-year fourth grader would read on Grade 4 passages or as shown in Figure 12 on page 25, 120 WRC. Because high accuracy was desired, Kate's teacher also included an error rate that would require at least 95% accuracy.

Example —MATT-GRADE 4

This second example provides practice for parts of the SLA for Matt, a fourth-grade student. Although Matt read 3 passages from each level of his SLA, only 1 passage per level will be observed, scored, and recorded.

Matt had been receiving special education. To prepare for his Annual Review, Matt's special education teacher examined his Fall Benchmark score. Not surprisingly, his scores were evidence of a Severe Reading Problem as compared to other fourth graders in his school district. To establish an individualized IEP goal for frequent progress monitoring, Matt's teacher completed the SLA below.

Table 8: Reading SLA for Matt, A Fourth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
4	52/6	61/9	54/7	54/7	Severe Reading Problem
3	39/10	43/10	44/8	43/10	At Risk Reader
2	61/10	59/2	83/10	61/10	Average Reader (But High Error Rate)

Matt reads his first passage from the *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages* for Grade 4. His WRC and errors are below.

Grade 4 Example Passage 1

Alan was a very brave and adventurous boy. He enjoyed learning new things and	14
exploring the land behind his house. One morning before he went exploring, he packed	28
his backpack. He put many things inside. He packed a flashlight, a candle, matches, a	43
compass, popcorn, a hard hat, and his lunch. Then he journeyed into the woods to	58
his new secret spot.	62
The previous day he had discovered a cave, and today he wanted to explore it.	77
Long, thick weeds hid the mouth of the cave. Alan pushed the weeds to the side and	94
looked into the cave.	98

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 300 WORDS Score: 54 WRC/ 7 Errors

Matt reads his second passage from the Grade 3 *Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages*. His WRC and errors are below.

Grade 3 Example Passage 1

The sun was out, and not a cloud was in the sky. Scott, or Scooter, as his close	18
friends liked to call him, thought today was a perfect day to go fishing at Old Bass	35
Lake.	36
Scooter climbed out of bed and quickly put on his lucky fishing shirt and the rest of	53
his clothes. He raced down the stairs of his house. Scooter came to a screeching stop	69
on the hardwood kitchen floor. He nearly slid into his mom, almost like he was stealing	85
second base.	87
"Mom, can I go fishing down at Old Bass?" he asked excitedly.	99

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 250 WORDS Score: 43 WRC/ 10 Errors

Matt reads his final passage from the Grade 2 *Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages*. His WRC and errors are below.

Grade 2 Example Passage 1

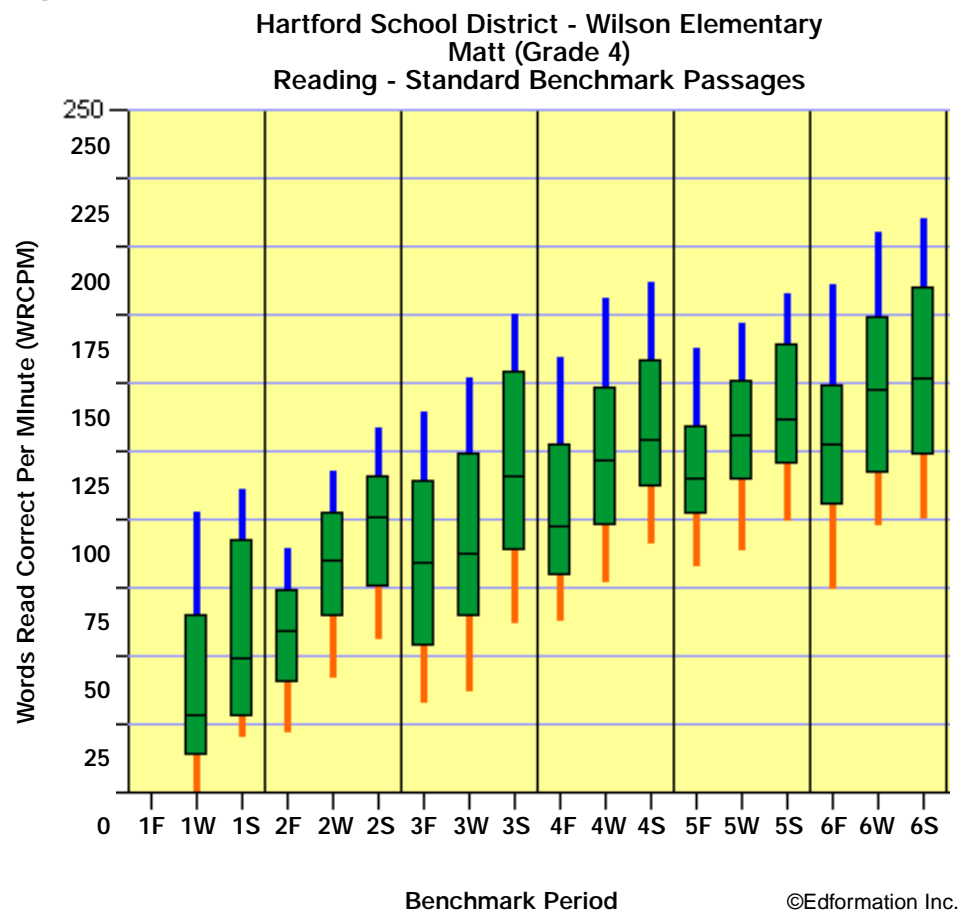
Maddie wanted to learn to ice skate. She went to the skating rink wearing her coat,	16
mitten, and hat. She couldn't wait to skate fast and spin in the air.	30
Maddie tied her new skates and marched out to the ice-skating rink. She took one	46
step on the ice and slipped! She tumbled onto the cold ice and hit her knees and	63
hands. She didn't know that the ice would be so slippery!	74
Learning to skate was harder than she thought.	82

PASSAGE CONTINUES TO ABOUT 250 WORDS Score: 61 WRC/ 10 Errors

Table 10: Reading SLA for Matt, A Fourth-Grader

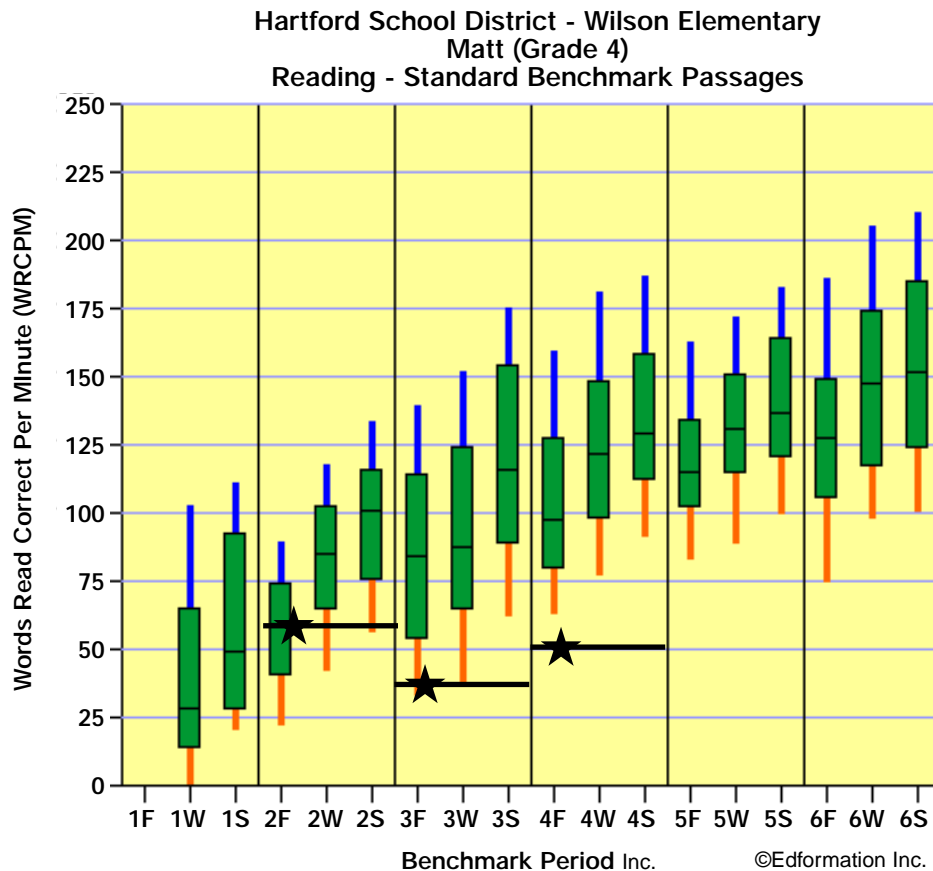
Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
4	52/6	61/9			
3	39/10				
2		59/2			

Calculate the Median, make and Make a ★ for his WRC on the graph of last year's Benchmark Scores for the District. Then describe his Current Performance Levels.

Figure 13: Graph Matt's SLA Results

Questions to Answer:

1. What differences did you notice between Matt's reading of Grade 2, Grade 3, and Grade 4 Passages?
2. Is this a severe performance discrepancy?
3. What would you write as Matt's IEP goal?

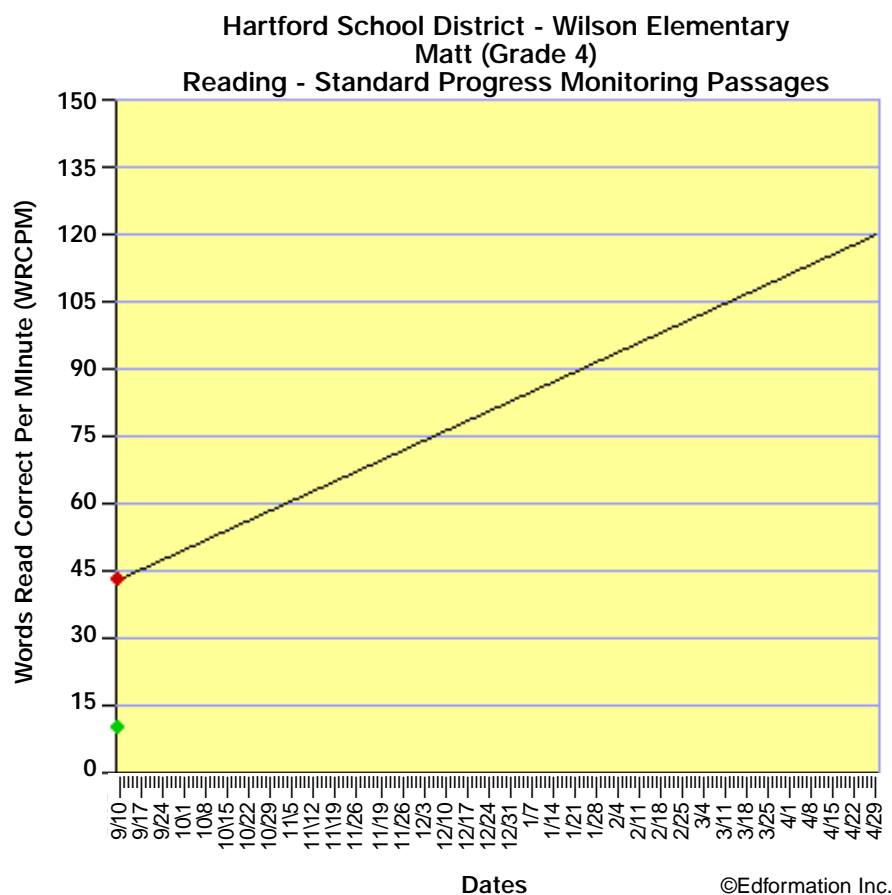
Figure 14: Graph Matt's SLA Results

Matt's IEP team used these SLA results to write the following IEP annual goal.

In 34 weeks (1 year), Matt will read 120 words read correctly with less than 3 errors from Grade 3 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

The IEP team decided that with special education, by the time of his annual IEP review in 34 school weeks (the time frame), Matt could be reading as well as a typical end-of-the-year third grader in the school district. Therefore, the IEP team chose Grade 3 passages as Matt's future performance level. The standard for success was defined as the number of WRC that a typical end-of-the-year third grader would read on Grade 3 passages or as shown in Figure 14, 120 WRC. Because high accuracy was desired, the IEP team included an error rate that would require at least 95% accuracy.

Matt's IEP goal would be entered into **AIMSweb PM** that would show his expected rate of progress based on the graph as shown in Figure 15 on page 32.

Figure 15: Graph of Matt's Expected Rate of Progress

Matt's progress would be monitored twice per week by giving him 1 randomly selected passage each time from the pool of Grade 3 *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages* specified by *AIMSweb PM* assessment schedule.

Setting the Time Frame, Goal Level, and Criterion for Success

After a Survey-Level Assessment I is completed and current performance level is determined, 3 tasks remain for writing quality progress monitoring goals (1) setting the goal time frame, (2) establishing the goal-level material, and (3) determining the criterion for goal success. This section of the workbook provides procedural information for educators to be able to complete these tasks.

Setting the Time Frame

Typically, setting the goal time frame is a procedural task. By knowing the type of instructional program a student receives and the procedural rules in the case of special education, setting the time frame is straightforward. Goal time frames generally fall into one of two categories, (1) goals set for the end of the school year, and (2) annual goals set for Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). In the first instance, the time frame would be based on the number of weeks until the end of the year. This time-frame is most common for students who are at risk and/or receiving specialized instruction in Title I or English Language Learner (ELL) programs. For example, the timeframe for a student identified as an at risk reader in the Fall Benchmark Assessment during the third week of the school year may be 32

weeks. Alternately, a student who is determined eligible for Title 1 to January may have a time frame of 16 weeks until the end of the school year.

In the second instance, when annual goals are written for an IEP, most commonly, goals are set for the IEP “anniversary date” or 1 academic year later. For example, when the annual goal is written on October 1, 2002, the goal time frame would be October 1, 2003. If the school calendar were 36 weeks long, then the timeframe would be 36 weeks. In some instances, students with IEPs do not use the anniversary date approach. Instead, all students’ IEPs expire at the end of the academic year. In cases like this, the same end-of-the-school year time frame approach is used as with students with less severe discrepancies.

Establishing the Goal-Level Material

Identifying the goal performance level, the reading level that the student would be expected to attain by the end of the goal time frame, is a **logical task** based on a combination of educational values, student educational needs and intensity of the instructional programs. Progress monitoring is based on a set of values that are predicated on students with educational needs receiving instructional programs that produce learning at a rate **faster rate** than peers. In other words, if they are to catch up, our instructional programs must produce learning at a faster rate than would be expected for students without educational needs. Thus, a third-grade student with a severe performance discrepancy who is successful in Grade 1 passages may be expected to be successful on Grade 3 reading passages by the end of the school year. Determining the goal-level material then, is based, in part, on this “faster than average rate value system.” As will be seen, this value system also will influence the criterion for success that we determine.

The second logical contribution to determining the goal level material is the severity of the academic problem. For most students who are at risk and/or receiving specialized instruction in Title I or English Language Learner (ELL) programs, the goal-level material will be that of their **current** grade placement. A third-grader in an ELL program would typically have as their expected goal level successful performance on Grade 3 reading passages. Likewise, an at risk fifth-grade student would be expected to have successful performance on Grade 5 passages as the goal-level material.

Students with severe performance discrepancies, (i.e., students who receive special education) may have **AIMSweb PM** goal levels that do not match their grade placement. For example, recall the case of Ginny presented earlier. This student was in Grade 6 but her SLA showed her to be successful on Grade 2 passages. This is a severe performance discrepancy. Although our values will prompt us to expect Ginny to learn at a faster rate, logically it may be too ambitious to expect her to be successful on Grade 6 passages in 1 year. In this case, her IEP team determined that success on Grade 4 reading passages would be an ambitious, but attainable goal. If Ginny met this goal in 1 year, although her performance discrepancy may be severe, it would be less so.

The final consideration in selecting the goal-level material is the intensity of the instructional program. This consideration is most evident when the goals for students with severe performance discrepancies are determined. IEP teams would expect more student growth if the student has 2 hours per day of special education reading instruction than if the student has 45 minutes per day.

Determining the Goal Criterion for Success

We have used the concept of “success” on graded reading passages throughout the process of setting individualized goals for use in *AIMSweb PM*. The other components of goal setting use a combination of judgments about performance on the SLA, values, program policies and procedures, and educational practice. In contrast, determining the goal criterion for success is **more data driven**. That is, the standard can be linked to actual student reading skills. Four general approaches can be used to establish an objective level of reading performance in WRC: (1) using school or school-district Benchmark Assessment Scores, (2) using WRC targets linked to success on State or other High Stakes tests, (3) using prior information on normative growth rates under conditions of standard instruction, and (4) taking your own sample of normative performance. Each approach has its own set of advantages and disadvantages that need to be considered. It is important to note, however, that because goal setting is a statement about values for individual students, none of the methods are THE best method. It is more important that educators understand and can explain the basis for their goals to others so that all parties can contribute to acceptance of and support for the goals.

Using School or School-District Benchmarks

The examples of goals presented to this point in the workbook have been linked to the Benchmark scores of a district. In each instance, the criterion for success has been derived from the level of performance of other students in the same community or school.

Figure 16: Sample School District Benchmarks

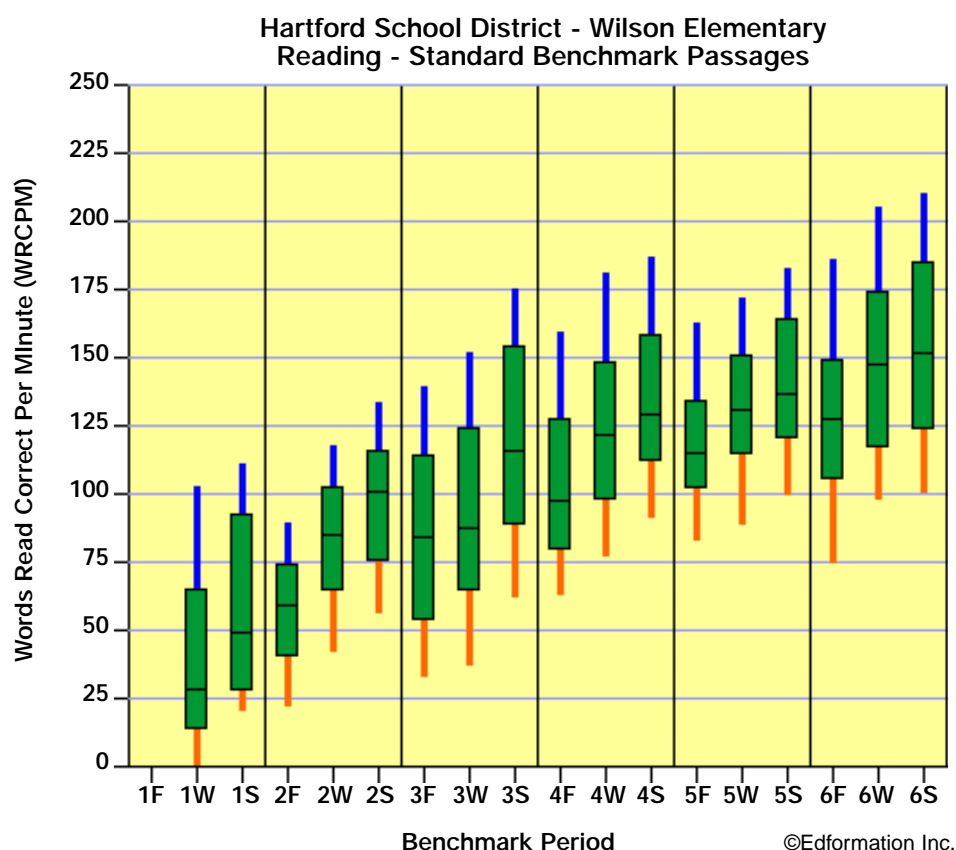


Figure 16 shows the number of WRC students at each grade of the school district read at the Fall,

Winter, and Spring Benchmarks. That exception is Grade 1 where students were tested in reading starting in the Winter rather than the Fall. Students at the 50th percentile in Grade 3 read 83 WRC in the Fall and by Spring read 120 WRC. Students in Grade 1 read 28 WRC at the Winter Benchmark and almost 50 WRC at the Spring Benchmark.

Benchmark scores like these can be used to establish a criterion for success for any given student once the expected level of performance has been determined. For an individualized goal for a student whose expected performance level in the Spring was Grade 5, the criterion for success would be based on the Benchmark scores of Grade 5 students. If the goal were to have the student read Grade 5 passages like average, end-of-the-year fifth graders, then the criterion for success would be 135 WRC. If the goal were to have the student read Grade 5 passages like low-average, end-of-the-year fifth graders, the criterion for success would be 120 WRC. If the goal were to have the student read Grade 5 passages like average, beginning-of-the-year fifth graders, the criterion for success would be 115 WRC.

Using the available Benchmark Assessment information allows the clear, objective specification of the reading score that would form the basis for progress monitoring. The rationale for selecting the criterion for success (e.g., read like a mid-year third grader; read like an end-of-the-year sixth grader) is understandable to parents and teachers alike so that discussions about what is expected for success are not clouded by technical language, test scores or other jargon. This high “understandability” factor is especially important for IEP meetings with students with disabilities.

Advantages of Using School or School-District Benchmarks

As just mentioned, one of the most obvious advantages of using Benchmark data is high understandability. Educators and parents can specify that they may want the fifth-grade student to read Grade 5 passages like other fifth-graders or they want their second-grade student to read Grade 2 passages like end-of-the-year second graders. Another, related advantage of using Benchmarks is that attainment of Benchmark goals may be a sign that an individual no longer needs additional instructional programs or support. For example, in the case of Amber discussed earlier, should she attain her goal of reading like end-of-the-year fourth graders with some individualized reading instruction, it may be decided that she no longer needs these additional supports and may be expected to achieve the progress with standard reading program that other students receive. Finally, goals written based on school or school districts may help evaluate the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for students who receive special education.

Disadvantages of Using School or School-District Benchmarks

When educators begin to use goal-setting procedures that are linked to educational practice and can be easily understood by parents and other teachers, they initially can be uncomfortable with the process. This discomfort has been observed even with educators who have been writing goals using practices that are haphazard or not based on validated strategies. This discomfort is occasionally expressed when local Benchmarks are used to set individualized goals in communities where low reading achievement is common. The argument goes something like this:

Do we want to have our goal be to have Matt read like ‘typical fourth-graders at Longfellow School’ when we know that typical fourth-graders there are poor readers?

This simple question is actually the basis for discussion of a number of complex sociological issues such as fairness, equity of resources, equal opportunity, etc. Full attention to this topic is beyond the scope of this workbook. However, in instances where overall school or school district achievement is very low, and individualized goals are written for students who are at risk or are significantly lower in these

contexts and additional resources are allocated, it seems reasonable and defensible to evaluate the success of these resources compared to the performance of other students. We would argue that the low-achievement of schools and school districts on Benchmark Assessments should be used to improve achievement outcomes for the schools or districts as a whole.

Using Linkages to High Stakes Tests

If schools or school districts have (1) Benchmark Assessment results, and (2) students' scores on state or district "high stakes" tests, it is possible to write reading goals that are linked to success. Assume, for example, that a school district has Benchmark Assessment data at each grade and students are expected to pass a State Reading Test in third grade and fifth grade to be promoted to next grade. If the correlation between the GOM reading measures and the State Reading Test is calculated, it is possible to identify a critical oral reading score that a high proportion of students who passed the State test obtained. Table 11 illustrates a real life example from 1 school district and 1 state's high stake test. Critical Grade 3 and Grade 5 reading passage scores for oral reading as they are related to the probability that a student who obtained that score passed the tests are shown.

Table 11: Critical R-GOM Oral Reading Scores for Success on a Selected State Reading Test

Grade	WRC for 80% Pass	WRC for 90% Pass
5	120	155
3	80	95

Grade 5 Students who read 120 WRC had an 80% chance of passing the State Reading Test. Students who read 155 WRC had a 90% chance of passing the State Reading Test. Knowing these critical scores allows educators to shift the focus of their goals from sole reliance on locally derived standards (which may or may not be linked to overall reading success) to a societal definition of success.

For an at risk fifth grader such as Robert, whose SLA results are shown in Table 12, if one knows his current reading performance level on Grade 5 Reading Assessment Passages (57 WRC), and a time frame is identified (32 weeks until the end of the school year), then a goal criterion can be written based on the success rate of other students who passed the State Reading Test.

Table 12: Robert's Grade 5 Reading Assessment Passages Results

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)
5	57/6	51/8	32/9	57/8

Robert's teacher used this information and the critical score at the point where 80% of students passed the Grade 5 State Reading Test to write the following annual goal.

In 32 weeks (1 year), Robert will read 120 words correctly from Grade 5 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

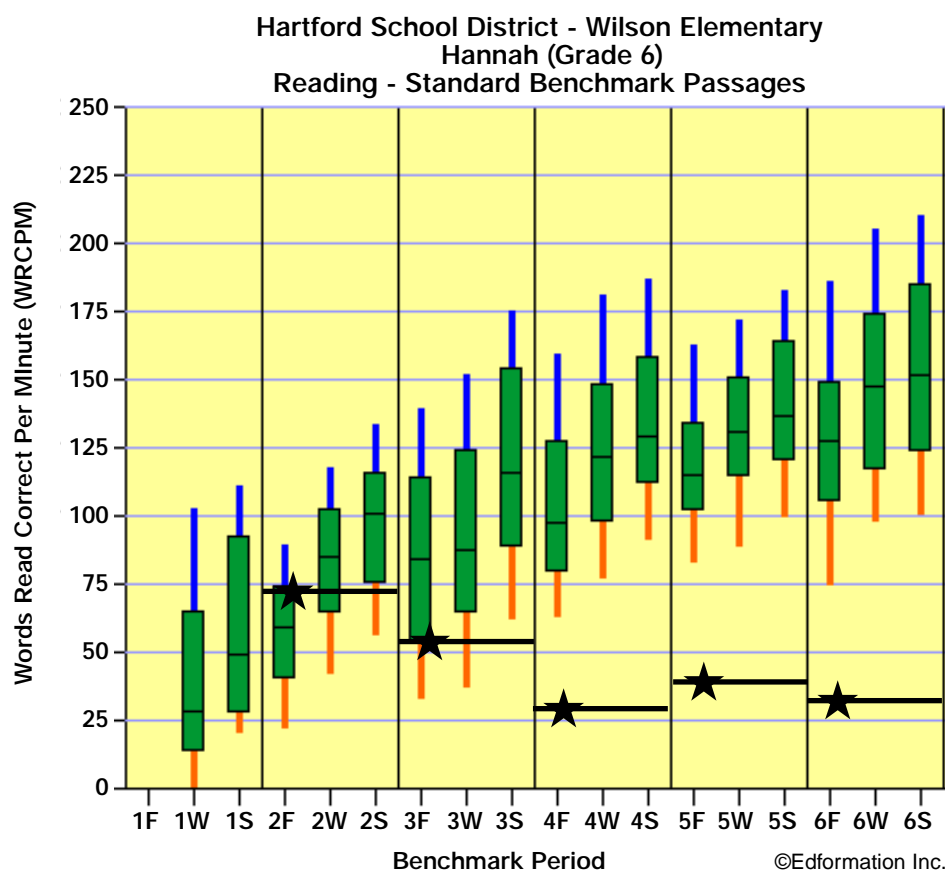
If Robert's teacher wanted to increase the probability that he passed the State Reading Test, the oral reading scores where a higher proportion of students passed could be used as the goal. If in this example, the score obtained by 90% of the students who passed was 155 WRC, then Robert's goal would be:

In 32 weeks (1 year), Robert will read 155 words correctly from Grade 5 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

The same general process can be used with students with more severe reading problems.

Table 13: Reading SLA for Hannah, A Sixth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
6	22/6	40/17	35/17	35/17	Severe Performance Discrepancy
5	39/16	40/15	44/8	40/15	Severe Performance Discrepancy
4	29/15	31/15	25/5	29/15	Severe Performance Discrepancy
3	61/10	59/10	44/8	59/10	At Risk Reader
2	74/5	59/2	83/10	74/5	Average Reader (But High Error Rate)

Figure 17: Graph of Hannah's SLA Results

Hannah currently receives special education. Her SLA results suggest that she reads Grade 3 passages as well as low average third graders in the school district and is most successful reading Grade 2 passages. In 1 year, which level of the State Reading Test should the team expect Hannah to have a high probability of passing (Grade 3 or Grade 5)? How confident would the IEP team like to be about Hannah's likelihood of passing (80 or 90%)?

Write a goal for Hannah, assuming 36 weeks until her annual review. Write a justification for your goal.

In _____ weeks (1 year), Hannah will read _____ words correctly from Grade _____ Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages

Write your rationale for your goal here.

Sample Answers:

In 36 weeks (1 year), Hannah will read 120 words correctly from Grade 5 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Write your rationale for your goal here.

The IEP team wanted Hannah to have an 80% probability of reading well enough to pass the Grade 5 State Reading Test.

Or

In 36 weeks (1 year), Hannah will read 95 words correctly from Grade 3 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Write your rationale for your goal here.

The IEP team wanted Hannah to have a 90% probability of reading well enough to pass the Grade 3 State Reading Test.

Advantages of Linkages to High Stakes Tests

By linking performance on graded reading passages to High Stakes Tests, presumably educators can reduce the problems of relying solely on local school or school district performance, especially when overall performance is low. High Stakes Tests are designed to represent levels of performance that represent high standards for success inside and outside of school. A second advantage is the opportunity to increase the instructional utility of the High Stakes Test information.

If High Stakes Tests, which cannot be used for formative evaluation, can be used to specify a valuable “target” that can be assessed formatively with **AIMSweb PM**, then the tests can be used more completely to help teachers inform their instruction. Finally, should a historical data base of both Benchmark and High Stakes Testing be obtained, it is possible to build reading goals that should be attained “along the way” to High Stakes Tests. For example, it may be possible to specify the number of WRC a first-grade student should read to be successful on a Grade 3 High Stakes Test.

Disadvantages of Using High Stakes Tests

The disadvantage of using links to High Stakes Tests for goal setting is three-fold. First, one has to assume that the High Stakes Test is a high quality test with evidence of validity. In many cases, these tests have been examined carefully with respect to their technical features. In other cases, no data have been provided to educators about test quality. It becomes very difficult to try to link up high quality tests like the GOM measurement system with known technical properties to tests with unknown technical properties. The goals written based on this linkage may be less than satisfactory. Second, the linkage must be established empirically. Initial field testing of linkages between Reading GOM measurement and sample High Stakes Tests has resulted in correlations of .70 or greater. Correlations of this magnitude provide sufficient accuracy for predicting passing scores such that few students at high risk would be “missed” and that the degree of over-identification is acceptable. Correlations less than .60 become more challenging in establishing the accuracy of the linkages.

Finally, the third disadvantage of linkages to High Stakes Tests is that the critical scores assume interpretation that their attainment is a guarantee of student success. Although the linkage to High Stakes Tests is theoretically feasible as a valid way to set individualized goals, the effects on actual student achievement needs additional field testing and empirical support.

Using Normative Growth Rates

For **AIMSweb PM** users who lack Benchmarks, or standards for success linked to High Stakes tests, an alternative is to use normative growth rates of elementary-aged students that have been reported in a published study by Fuchs, Fuchs, Fernstrom, Germann, and Hamlett (1993). In this study, Fall, Winter, and Spring Benchmarks from students who received standard reading instruction (that is, no highly specialized curriculum or teaching practices were implemented on a widespread basis) were identified and the rates of progress in the number of WRC per week were calculated. Results are shown in Table 16.

Table 14: Realistic and Ambitious Reading Goals Based on a Normative Sample of Students Receiving Standard Instruction

Grade Level Passages	Realistic Goals	Ambitious Goals
6-8	.3 WRC per week	.65 WRC per week
5	.5 WRC per week	.8 WRC per week
4	.85 WRC per week	1.1 WRC per week
3	1.0 WRC per week	1.5 WRC per week
2	1.5 WRC per week	2.0 WRC per week
1	2.0 WRC per week	3.0 WRC per week

To use this information to set the criterion for success, you need to know (1) the current performance level of the student on the SLA, (2) the number of weeks for the goal period, and (c) the goal level material. Using the formula below, the criterion for success is calculated.

$$\text{Criterion for Success} = \text{Score on SLA} + (\text{Grade Growth Rate times \# of Weeks})$$

The use of this formula is illustrated with the case of Rocco, a second-grade student who was identified by his teacher as at risk at the beginning of the school year. Rocco's teacher wanted him to improve his reading skills at a faster rate than other second graders so he could "catch up." Rocco's current reading performance is shown in Table 15 on the next page.

Table 15: Reading SLA for Rocco, A Second-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)	Fall Performance Level
2	30/3	27/2	36/4	30/3	At Risk

Because Rocco's reading skills were low, but not severely so, his teacher determined that second-grade reading passages were suitable for the annual goal. Rocco currently read about 30 WRC with 3 errors on that level of reading assessment passages. Because 32 weeks remained in the school year, 30 weeks was selected as the time frame. Because Rocco's teacher wanted him to learn at a faster rate to be able to catch up, the Ambitious progress rate for Grade 2 (2.0 WRC improvement per week) was selected and the formula discussed previously was used to set the goal.

Criterion for Success = Score on SLA (30)+ (Ambitious Grade Growth Rate (2.0) times # of Weeks (32)

Or

30 + (2.0 * 32) or 30 + 64 = Annual goal of 94 WRC

Using this formula, now write an annual goal using the earlier example of Matt, Grade 4 and his SLA results below, where his IEP goal expires in 36 weeks and his IEP team wanted him to progress in Grade 3 Reading Passages at the same rate as typical Grade 3 students.

Table 16: Reading SLA for Matt, A Fourth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Passage 1 (WRC/E)	Passage 2 (WRC/E)	Passage 3 (WRC/E)	Median (WRC/E)
4	52/6	61/9	54/7	54/7
3	39/10	43/10	44/8	43/10
2	61/10	59/2	83/10	61/10

Criterion for Success = Grade 3 SLA Score (____)+ (Grade 3 Growth Rate (____) times # of Weeks (____)

Or

Criterion for Success = (____) + (____ * ____)

In ____ weeks (1 year), Matt will read ____ words correctly from Grade 3 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Answer: 43 WRC + (1.0 WRC * 36) = 43 + 36 = 79 WRC

In 36 weeks (1 year), Matt will read 79 words correctly from Grade 3 Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Advantages of Growth Rates to Write Goals

The principal advantage of using these growth rates is they allow an objective, understandable way of determining a criterion for success. Parents can understand that schools want their child to “learn to read at the rate of typical fourth-graders.” Members of IEP teams can understand that to reduce the performance discrepancies of students in special education, growth rates faster than those of typical students must be reflected in IEP goals.

Disadvantages of Growth Rates to Write Goals

The principal disadvantage of using these growth rates is that they may be underestimates of student progress when quality instruction is delivered. In other words, there is the possibility of unambitious goals. Therefore, when goals are written using this method, it is strongly encouraged that educators consider the growth rates identified as Ambitious as the minimum expected rate of growth.

Taking Your Own Sample of Normative Performance

Some users of *AIMSweb PM* may work in schools that are not yet using *AIMSweb Benchmark* to evaluate the growth and development of basic skills of students in their school or district. Therefore, they may not have the convenient, highly accurate and easily understandable information that makes selection of a criterion for success so straightforward. Furthermore, they may not be comfortable with the growth rates identified by some students with “standard” instruction.

One reasonable, albeit temporary, alternative to the current lack of Benchmark information is for the *AIMSweb PM* user to take their own sample of normative performance of students in the grade that they are interested in. Procedures for selecting a sample of 7-10 students to give a estimate of, for example, how fourth graders or second graders read are described in Habedank (2002).

If students are sampled properly, and the median score is used to identify the criterion for success of a goal, the rough approximation may suffice until more accurate Benchmarks are established.

Advantages of Your Own Sample

The advantages that are associated with using school or school-district Benchmark Assessment results apply to the use of your own small sample of students.

Disadvantages of Your Own Sample

Likewise, the disadvantages of using Benchmark Assessment results apply as well, but these disadvantages may be compounded by the accuracy of your student sample to represent the skills of “typical students.” Generally speaking, the smaller the sample size, the greater the likelihood of inaccurate results that can be generalized to larger groups of students.

Strategies for Progress Monitoring

Once a *Survey-Level Assessment* (SLA) is completed and individualized goals are written, educators can begin the process of monitoring progress frequently. This section of the **AIMSweb PM Workbook** identifies and answers key questions about the actual progress monitoring process and details specific strategies that educators have found successful.

This part of the Workbook is divided into the following sections:

1. How Frequently is Progress Monitored?
2. What Reading Passages are Used for Testing?
3. Who Does the Testing?
4. Where Students are Tested

How Frequently is Progress Monitored?

With students at risk for reading difficulties or who already have severe reading needs, progress needs to be monitored frequently. The question arises as to “how often is frequent enough?” It is important to note that there is no single formula that has been validated as to how frequently students must be tested. Instead, we put forth three related principles that must be balanced.

1. How Frequently Students are Tested Should Be Related to the Severity of the Reading Problem.
2. We Must Balance What is Ideal with What is Feasible.
3. The Less Frequently We Assess, the “Higher Quality” Our Information Should Be.

Making these decisions begins with a more overarching principle; that the more data points we have and the sooner we have them, the greater our ability will be to determine the student’s rate of progress with confidence and the potential need to change the reading intervention. As a rule, it seems that a minimum of 7-10 data points are necessary to make a reliable decision about student progress (Shinn & Good, 1989). This minimum number of data points is based on progress monitoring procedures where students are tested on a single, randomly selected passage each time. The accuracy of decisions about students’ rates of progress is increased with each data point. Therefore, although moderately reliable judgments about student progress can be made with 7-10 data points, on average, 12-15 is more accurate, and 15-20 is even more accurate.

Using this principle, then, if Desiree is tested once each week using 1 *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passage*, then her teacher will be able to make a reliable judgment about progress in 7-10 weeks. Desiree’s teacher may make an even more accurate decision about progress in 20 weeks than 7 weeks. However, by this time, it is possible that Desiree may have been in a program that needed changing for more than half the school year. If, however, Desiree’s progress was measured 2 times each week, each time with a different *Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passage*, her teacher could make a decision about progress in as little as 4-5 weeks.

More Severe Problems, More Frequent Measurement

If we build on the basic principle illustrated in the case of Desiree, for students with more severe reading difficulties, we need to monitor more frequently so that we can make as many changes as we need to improve reading achievement. If Desiree had been receiving special education, it would be desirable

to monitor her progress 2 times per week, if feasible. If Desiree was a student at risk for reading problems rather than being a student with severe reading difficulties, her teacher may decide to monitor her progress once per week or even once every 2 weeks because the problem was less severe. As a rule, there appears to be no benefit to decision making for testing more than 2 times per week. The minimum numbers of time for progress monitoring beyond the need for 7-10 data points has not been established.

Balancing What is Ideal with What is Feasible

With unlimited resources, we would advocate monitoring the progress of all students at risk or with severe reading discrepancies 2 times per week. A different passage would be used each of the 2 times. However, with potentially up to 20% of a school's population having their progress monitored frequently, with limited resources this may not be feasible logistically.

For planning purposes, teachers must allocate approximately 2.5 minutes for testing and scoring a student reading 1 standard passage, assuming that the tester has been well trained and has practiced to mastery. For a special education teacher with 15 students with reading IEP goals, 2 times per week would translate into 75 minutes per week of testing. For a Title I teacher with 32 students, a 2 times per week progress monitoring schedule would mean 160 minutes (or 2 hours and 40 minutes) per week. If teachers know (1) how many students need frequent monitoring in reading, (2) the severity of their students' reading problems, and (3) what if any additional testing support they have (e.g., aides and paraprofessionals) it becomes possible to determine how frequently each student's progress can be monitored. We recommend that this information is organized systematically such in the Assessment Planning Chart below. Two teachers' testing frequencies are presented as illustrations.

Mr. Jones is an elementary special education teacher with 16 students with IEP objectives in reading on his caseload and a 20 hour per week aide.

Table 17: Mr. Jones' Progress Monitoring Frequency Planning Chart

Mr. Jones's Allocated Testing Time Per Week	Aides Allocated Testing Time Per Week	Students Requiring Frequent Monitoring	Number of Potential Testing Sessions Per Week Estimating 3 Minutes Per Session	Number Needed at 2 Times Per Week	Number Needed at 1 Time Per Week
80 Minutes	160 Minutes	16	80	32	16

With 240 minutes per week total available for progress monitoring, this would provide the opportunity to complete 80 reading testing sessions, estimating 3 minutes per session. Only 32 would be needed for 2 times per week monitoring. Given the severe reading needs of the students, it becomes feasible to monitor progress 2 times per week.

Contrast Mr. Jones' Planning Chart with the chart of Ms. Smith who is a middle school Title I teacher with a caseload of 35 at risk students and an aide who is available for all purposes for 2-hour per week.

Table 18: Ms. Smith's Progress Monitoring Frequency Planning Chart

Ms. Smith's Allocated Testing Time Per Week	Aides Allocated Testing Time Per Week	Students Requiring Frequent Monitoring	Number of Potential Testing Sessions Per Week Estimating 3 Minutes Per Session	Number Needed at 2 Times Per Week	Number Needed at 1 Time Per Week
60 Minutes	30 Minutes	35	32	70	35

With 90 minutes per week total available for progress monitoring, this would provide the opportunity to complete 32 reading testing sessions. Therefore, with these resources, 2 times per week monitoring is not feasible. However, 1 time per week is feasible and given the reading needs of the students may be less severe, this frequency is defensible.

The Less Frequently We Monitor, the Higher Quality Data We Must Have

When large numbers of students are at risk and need more frequent progress monitoring such as in programs for English Language Learners and when there are limited resources, it may not be feasible to monitor progress weekly. We recommend completing a Planning Chart to help determine what is possible with the available resources. Some large remedial programs may test each student every 2 weeks. Some large programs we have seen monitor progress every 3-4 weeks. Once the testing frequency exceeds once per 2 weeks, we recommend using 2-3 reading assessment passages each time a student is tested. The median score is then used as the progress monitoring data point. This process allows teachers to do less frequent monitoring but when they do test, it increases their likelihood of obtaining a high quality estimate of how their students are doing.

A sample of some of the testing schedules we have seen as a function of the severity of the reading problem and quality and timeliness is shown in Table 19, on the next page. These schedules are not to be considered the only frequencies that can be implemented.

Table 19: Sample Testing Schedules by Problem Severity and Quality and Timeliness

Severity of Reading Problem	Testing Frequency	Number of Passages Each Session	Comment
Severe such as Special Education	2 times per week	1	Best Practice; Very Timely Decisions
Severe such as Special Education	3 times in 2	1	Defensible; Moderately Timely Decisions
Severe such as Special Education	3 times in 2	3	Defensible; Less Timely Decisions
Remedial or At Risk	1 time per week	1	Defensible; Timely Decisions
Remedial or At Risk	Every 2 weeks	1	Moderately Defensible; Timely Decisions
Remedial or At Risk	Every 4 weeks	3	Moderately Defensible; Much Less Timely
Large Scale Remedial Program	Every 2 weeks	1	Defensible; Timely Decisions
Large Scale Remedial Program	Every 4 weeks	3	Defensible; Less Timely

What Reading Passages are Used for Testing?

AIMSweb Progress Monitor (AIMSweb PM) is designed for use with the **AIMSweb Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages**. These passages were designed to provide tests of about equal difficulty so that change over time on the passages can be detected as student growth rather than as a difference in the difficulty of the reading passages. For more information, see the **Edformation Standard Reading Assessment Passages Technical Manual**. However, **AIMSweb PM** can be used with other general outcome measures including CBM Spelling, and Dynamic Indicators of Early Literacy (DIBELS-used with Kindergarten and beginning Grade 1 students).

Who Does the Progress Monitoring Testing?

When using **AIMSweb PM**, typically progress monitoring information is collected by the teacher providing the instruction or a paraprofessional. Articles in the professional literature have demonstrated that general and special education teachers and their aides can test students, reliably, efficiently and accurately. A professional teaching license is nice but not necessary for frequent progress monitoring. However, should aides or paraprofessional assist in data collection, we recommend that licensed teachers or other school personnel test the students in at least 25% of the testing sessions to ensure professional integrity.

Accuracy and efficiency in testing for frequent progress monitoring is obtained when attention is given to 3 variables:

1. Confidentiality/Sensitivity.
2. Sufficient Training.
3. Sufficient Practice and Feedback.

Confidentiality/Sensitivity

In our experience, whenever anyone other than the classroom teacher is doing testing, that person should be made aware of, or reminded of, issues of confidentiality and sensitivity. That is, comments about how individual students performed, either positive or negative, are to be made only under professional circumstances, when the information can be used to inform teaching. For licensed professionals, simply providing a set of positive and negative examples is sufficient. For example, a special education teacher who is monitoring the progress of second-grade students on her special education caseload may comment to other second-grade teachers generally about how rapidly the students are improving. If referring to Miguel, any comments should be made privately to Miguel's teacher such as:

"I noticed that Miguel is really improving his reading and really used word attack strategies well" or "I observed that Miguel seemed to lose his place a lot. Is this a problem in the classroom?" It is not professional to discuss Miguel's performance casually in the lunchroom.

Most commonly, progress monitoring information is discussed at team meetings such as an annual IEP reviews. Teachers may comment that "Sandra as part of Benchmark testing, is now reading almost as well as most students in her general education classroom."

For non-licensed personnel, like aides, teachers in training, or volunteers, at least 10-15 minutes of training and discussion should be devoted to the topic of confidentiality and sensitivity. For these persons, it is not appropriate to discuss the positive or negative performance of any individual child except

with the teacher. It is important to emphasize that what seems as a casual conversation can have serious consequences. Thus going over situations like...

You saw your neighbor in the grocery store and he asked you how your job is going and

“Do you know how the students are doing?”

Answer?

“As part of my job, I shouldn’t speak how any of the students are doing.”

Alternately, in supervision meetings, student teachers also should not discuss the performance of individual students unless (1) they use a false name, and (2) they have discussed the information with their supervising teacher.

Training

Regardless of licensure or prior testing experience, persons who will be collecting progress monitoring information for **AIMSweb PM** should be well trained. Regardless of the academic subjects, we suggest allocating approximately 10-15 minutes at the beginning of training to review issues of Confidentiality/Sensitivity with practical examples.

Using the **Administration and Scoring of Curriculum-Based Measurement (R-CBM) for Use in General Outcome Measurement** workbook, the estimated amount of time for training in reading is approximately 2.5 hours.

The specific content of training reading is laid out in the **Administration and Scoring of Curriculum-Based Measurement (R-CBM) for Use in General Outcome Measurement** workbook. Each trainee should have their own workbook as it includes practice examples that must be completed. As some general guidelines for training, we suggest the following:

1. It is better to do too much training than too little training. Although the testing procedures are generally simple to do, they are not automatically easy to learn. Even when initial training is intensive, we expect that there will be errors in implementation that must be corrected through feedback.
2. The training atmosphere should be one where everyone provides and is open to feedback. This means systematically asking trainees to provide their scores on the practice exercises. For example, if trainees are sitting 5 to a table, 2 tables can give their scores for Reading Practice Exercise 1, 2 other tables for Reading Practice Exercise 2, etc.
3. Everyone needs opportunities for corrective feedback. Trainees should pair up and complete one **Accuracy of Implementation Rating Scale (AIRS)** on each other. After feedback provided, a second practice administration should occur. An **AIRS** for Reading is presented below.
4. Complete the exercises for Inter-Scorer Agreement and post the scores. Doing so, again, will provide opportunities for corrective feedback and gaining confidence in the quality of the Benchmark information.

Table 20: A Sample of the Accuracy of Implementation Reading Scale (AIRS)

Accuracy of Implementation Rating Scale (AIRS)

Examiner: _____

Observer: _____

X = completed accurately O = incorrect

Assessment Procedure

	Observation				
	1	2	3	4	5
Places student copy in front of reader.	—	—	—	—	—
Places examiner copy out of view of reader.	—	—	—	—	—
Seated appropriate distance from reader.	—	—	—	—	—
Says standardized directions.	—	—	—	—	—
Says "Begin".	—	—	—	—	—
Starts stopwatch at correct time (after student says first word).	—	—	—	—	—
Marks errors on examiner copy.	—	—	—	—	—
Times accurately for 1 minute.	—	—	—	—	—
Stays "Stop".	—	—	—	—	—
Stops stopwatch.	—	—	—	—	—
Marks last word read with a bracket.	—	—	—	—	—
Turns off tape recorder (optional).	—	—	—	—	—
Determines WRC and Errors.	—	—	—	—	—
Records score as WRC/Errors.	—	—	—	—	—

Practice

If the recommended training materials and exercises are completed as detailed, trainees will be accurate in their administration and scoring. However, without practice, on average, trainees will be slow and inefficient. In reading, studies completed by Dr. Caren Wesson documented that experienced teachers with good training in administration and scoring averaged about 5-7 minutes to read the directions, have the students read for 1 minute, score the results, and write down the score. With practice and peer feedback, teachers increased their testing efficiency to an average of about 2 minutes total for a 1-minute reading sample. We suggest that trainees work with a peer and jointly administer and score 10 reading measures. Again, the **AIRS** can be used to provide structured feedback.

Where Students Are Tested

Testing for progress monitoring is most often conducted as a set aside reading “station” within the general or special education classroom. A station works better than having students read as part of their small group reading instruction, for example, where they are all sitting at a small round table with the teacher, and each student would be tested in front of other students.

A reading station should be reasonably quiet and away from distractions (sinks, water fountains) and include a table or desk so that the examiner can sit across from, not next to, the student and so that the student can have a place to lay down their copies of the reading passages.

In larger remedial programs such as Title I or ELL where an aide is assisting in data collection, multiple reading stations can be set up within the classroom or in the hallway outside of the classroom. It is important to ensure that reading stations outside the classroom attend to school schedules so that there is minimal hallway traffic.

Summary

For many students at risk or with identified reading difficulties, progress must be monitored more frequently to ensure that they are progressing or need to have their reading programs changed. With these students, there is empirical evidence that when teachers write data-based goals, monitor progress frequently and adjust their programs when they are not working, student achievement improves significantly. This Workbook has emphasized that good progress monitoring is tied to the writing of quality individualized goals based on students' current performance. The cornerstone of describing current performance is the *Survey-Level Assessment* (SLA). Once these data are obtained, it is possible to write individualized goals using a standard format. The two most challenging decisions are (1) identifying the level of successful reading performance expected in 1 year or at the end of the school year, and (2) establishing a criterion for success. The former requires professional judgments about students' educational needs. The latter is a more empirical process where 1 of 4 data-driven methods can be used. Once a goal is written, progress monitoring becomes a straightforward process of determining how often students will be tested and where they will be tested.

This workbook has provided the underpinnings of frequent progress monitoring. Strategies that have been successful in schools around the country were described to enhance the success of your ***AIMSweb Progress Monitor*** experiences.

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Additional Goal Setting Practice Exercises

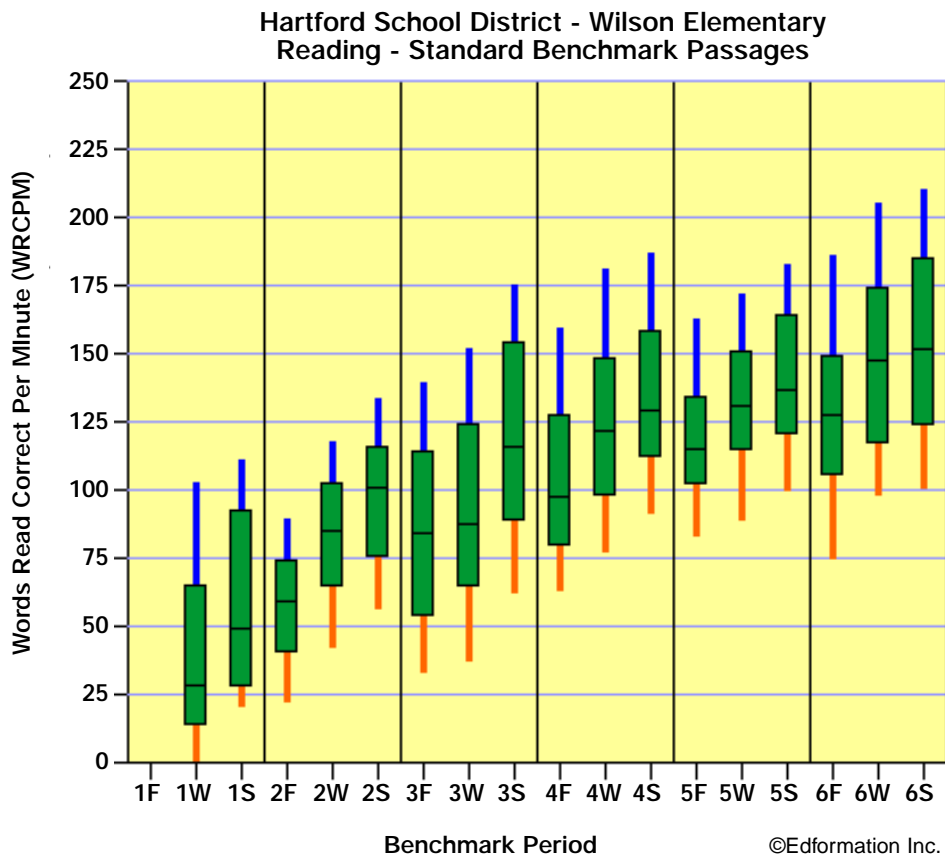
This section provides you with additional case studies with which to practice writing goals. For each case, assume:

1. That the Survey Level Assessment (SLA) was obtained in the Fall.
2. The Goal Date will be in 36 Weeks.

Reading *Survey-Level Assessment* for Carrie, A Third-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Median (WRC/E)	Performance Level
3	29	
2	41	
1	59	

Graph Carrie's SLA Data.



Determine if this is a moderate performance discrepancy where the goal material can be Carrie's current grade level or is so significant that lower grade passages should be considered as her goal material.

Write a goal for Carrie, assuming 36 weeks until her annual review. Tell what goal criterion method you used and write a justification for your goal.

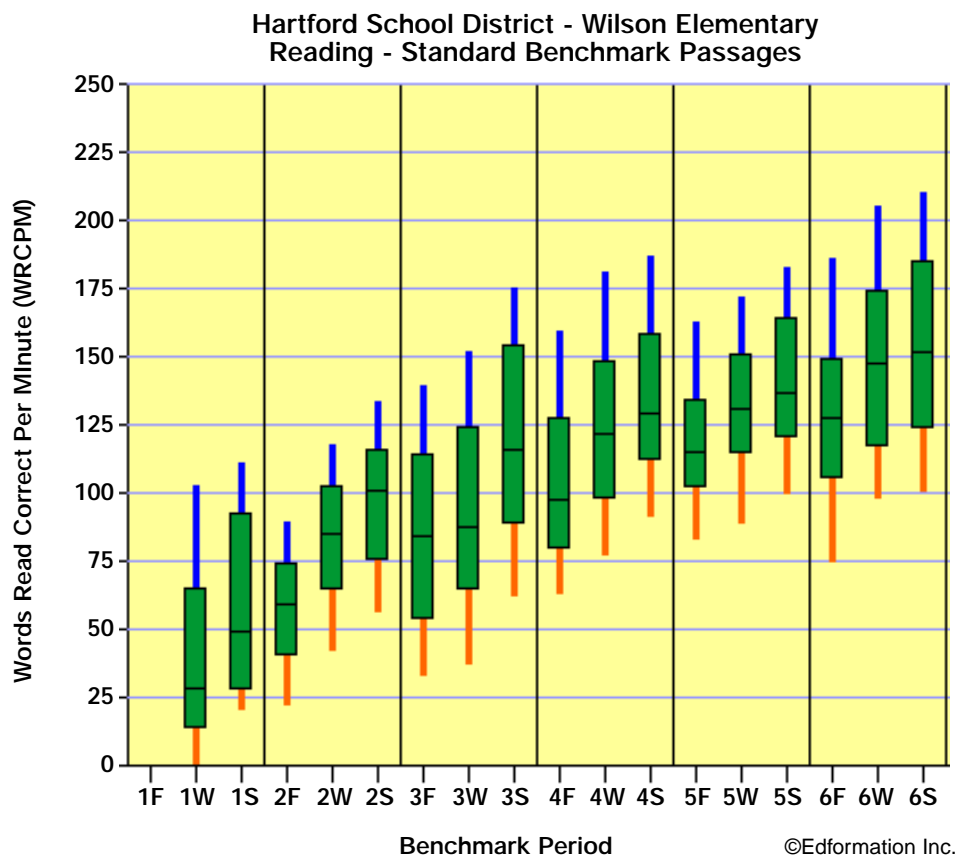
In _____ weeks (1 year), Carrie will read _____ words correctly from Grade _____ Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Write your Goal Criterion Method and rationale for your goal here.

Reading *Survey-Level Assessment* for Sarah, A Second-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Median (WRC/E)	Performance Level
3	10/8	
2	19/9	

Graph Sarah's SLA Data.



Determine if this is a moderate performance discrepancy where the goal material can be Sarah's current grade level or is so significant that lower grade passages should be considered as her goal material.

Write a goal for Sarah, assuming 36 weeks until her annual review. Tell what goal criterion method you used and write a justification for your goal.

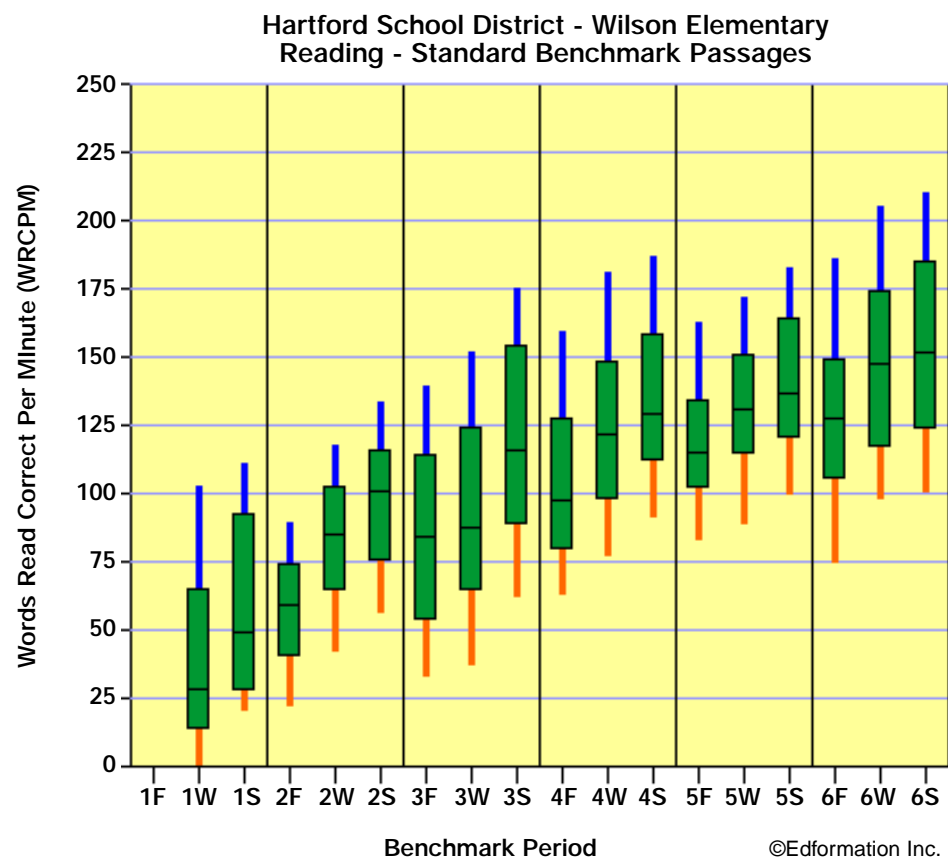
In _____ weeks (1 year), Sarah will read _____ words correctly from Grade _____ Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Write your Goal Criterion Method and rationale for your goal here.

Reading *Survey-Level Assessment* for Albert, A Fourth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Median (WRC/E)	Performance Level
4	34/12	
3	48/8	
2	71/3	
1	76/4	

Graph Albert's SLA Data.



Determine if this is a moderate performance discrepancy where the goal material can be Albert's current grade level or is so significant that lower grade passages should be considered as his goal material.

Write a goal for Albert, assuming 36 weeks until his annual review. Tell what goal criterion method you used and write a justification for your goal.

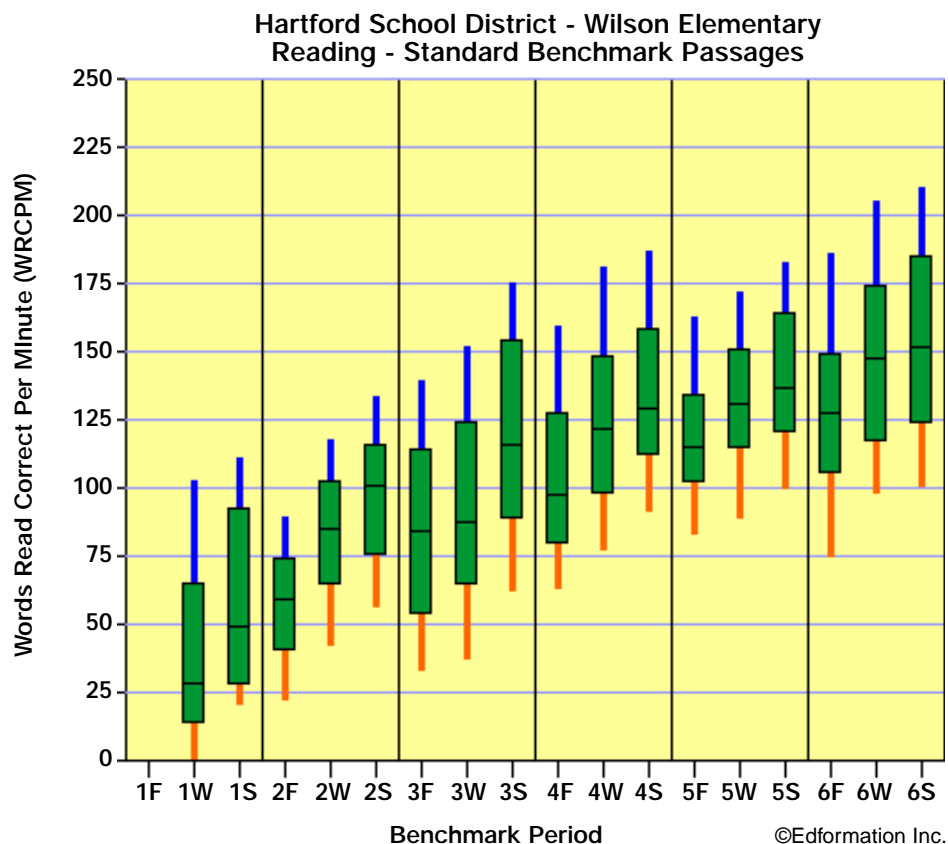
In _____ weeks (1 year), Albert will read _____ words correctly from Grade _____ Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Write your Goal Criterion Method and rationale for your goal here.

Reading *Survey-Level Assessment* for Anna, A Fifth-Grader

Grade Reading Assessment Passages	Median (WRC/E)	Performance Level
4	35/10	
3	35/7	
2	45/8	
1	55/6	

Graph Anna's SLA Data.



Determine if this is a moderate performance discrepancy where the goal material can be Anna's current grade level or is so significant that lower grade passages should be considered as her goal material.

Write a goal for Anna's, assuming 36 weeks until her annual review. Tell what goal criterion method you used and write a justification for your goal.

In _____ weeks (1 year), Anna will read _____ words correctly from Grade _____ Standard Progress Monitor Reading Assessment Passages.

Write your Goal Criterion Method and rationale for your goal here.